

PROPOSALS FOR THE OPERATION OF EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS

This document sets out Wirral Borough Council's proposals for executive arrangements pursuant to section 25 of the Local Government Act 2000 and paragraph 4 of the Local Government Act 2000 (Proposals for Executive Arrangements) (England) Direction 2000. The proposals are made following consultation with local government electors and other interested persons in the area.

1. Interpretation

In these proposals:-

"the authority" means Wirral Borough Council;

"the regulations" means the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000;

"council functions" means functions that are non executive functions and includes functions that have to be discharged by the full council as well as those that may be delegated by the council to a committee, sub-committee or officers;

"executive functions" means functions that are the responsibility of the executive.

2. Forms of executive

2.1 The Council proposes to adopt the form of executive set out in section 11(3) of the Local Government Act 2000, namely:

- (a) a councillor of the authority (referred to hereafter as the Leader) elected as leader of the executive by the authority; and
- (b) two or more councillors of the authority appointed to the executive by ***the authority***.

3. The roles of the executive

- 3.1 The executive will carry out all the authority's functions which are not the responsibility of any other part of the authority whether by law or by the terms of its Constitution.
- 3.2 Schedule 1 of these proposals sets out the executive functions of the authority that the authority had the discretion to choose as executive functions (local choice functions). They were chosen as executive functions on the basis of their strategic nature.

3.3 All other functions which are not specified as council functions under Schedule 2 and which are not by law required to be exercised by the full council will be executive functions.

4. **The roles of the council**

4.1 The full council will be responsible for the adoption or approval of the plans and strategies set out at Schedule 2, Part I to these proposals. The list includes those plans and strategies that the council are required to adopt by the regulations, those that the council are recommended to adopt by the Statutory Guidance and further plans or strategies that the authority have decided should be approved or adopted by the full council. ***It is anticipated that the Authority's overview and scrutiny committees will have a key responsibility for the development of plans and strategies prior to their submission to the Executive and approval by council.***

4.2 In respect of the plans and strategies referred to at 4.1 above, it is proposed that the full council may:-

- Adopt (with or without modification) the plan or strategy;
- Give instructions requiring the executive to reconsider a draft plan or strategy submitted by the executive to the council for consideration;
- Amend the draft plan or strategy submitted by the executive to the council for consideration

4.3 The functions specified under Schedule 2, Part II to these proposals will also be council functions. These are functions in respect of which the council had the discretion to choose whether or not they were to be executive or council functions. They were chosen as council functions on the basis of their regulatory, quasi judicial or enforcement nature.

4.4 The functions specified under Schedule 2, Part III to the proposals will be council functions. These are miscellaneous functions required by the regulations to be council functions.

4.5 The council will discharge the above functions either through meetings of the full council, or by delegation to committees, sub-committees, and officers in accordance with the Delegation Scheme approved by the council and set out in its Constitution. ***The full scheme of delegation, standing orders and remaining constitution requirements will be developed and agreed during the remainder of the current municipal year.***

4.6 The role of full council will include holding meetings to debate key plans, strategies and issues of local concern.

4.7 Overview and scrutiny arrangements are council functions and are described at paragraph 5 below.

5. **Overview and scrutiny**

5.1 The authority proposes to set up ***a maximum of six*** overview and scrutiny committees ***The number of members serving on these committees is yet to be determined but every non-executive member who so wishes will be able to be involved in the Overview and Scrutiny process. The committees will have*** cross

cutting terms of reference to cover life in the Borough as a whole. The committees will have the powers set out in section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

- 5.2 Each committee may draw from its membership as required sub-committees dealing with (a) policy review and development and (b) scrutiny reviews and Best Value.
- 5.3 The relevant committees will carry out in depth select committee style reviews and monitor Best Value reviews.
- 5.4 The committee and sub-committee meetings will be in public unless exemptions referred to in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 apply.
- 5.5 The overview and scrutiny committees will determine their own programme of work which will be linked to the council's forward plan of key decisions.
- 5.6 The committees will have a chair and vice-chair. The work of the overview and scrutiny boards will be co-ordinated by informal meetings of the committee chairs.
- 5.7 Public engagement in the overview and scrutiny process will be key and the public will be encouraged to attend and participate in meetings. Members of the committees will be able to trigger scrutiny reviews and members of the public will also be able to suggest in-depth scrutiny reviews through their ward councillors. The mechanisms for triggering scrutiny reviews will be set out in the council's constitution.
- 5.8 Overview and scrutiny members will have the power to call-in decisions relating to executive functions after the decisions are made but before they are implemented. The call-in procedure will be set out in the council's constitution.
- 5.9 In certain circumstances minority reports may be submitted to Council as set out in the council's constitution.

6. **Standards of conduct**

- 6.1 It is proposed to continue with the existing Standards Committee, which consists of seven elected councillors and two independent members chosen from the local community following interviews.
- 6.2 The Standards Committee will exercise all functions of the council under Part III of the Local Government Act 2000 which are not specifically required to be exercised by the council, ***with the exception of overseeing the Authority's constitution which shall be a matter for the Council.***

7. **Timetable**

The Council proposes to introduce its executive arrangements following the local elections in May 2002. ***In the meantime the Council will complete its constitution in more detail using lessons learned from the current transitional arrangements.***

8. **Transitional arrangements**

The council has operated "shadow" executive arrangements involving a Leader and Cabinet and Select Committees since December 2000. It is proposed to continue the Pilot until May 2002 but refining and improving it in the light of experience,

Government Guidance and responses to public consultation. ***This experience will inform the Council's full constitution.***

9. **Area Forums**

The Council proposes to put in place a number of multi-ward area forums which will act as local consultative bodies, contributing to the Council's Community Strategy, and consisting of public, private and voluntary sector representatives. Area Forums will be fully operational across the whole of the Council area by May 2002.

10. **Consultation**

The Council has conducted extensive consultation with electors and other interested persons in the area before formulating these proposals. Details of the consultation undertaken, the outcome and the extent to which this is reflected in the proposals is attached at Schedule 3.

11. **Best Value**

In drawing up these proposals, the Council has had regard to all relevant considerations, including securing continuous improvement in the way in which the council's functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness; the requirements of the Local Government Act 2000, the regulations issued pursuant to the Act, and the New Council Consultations - Guidance Pack.

SCHEDULE 1

EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS

Local choice functions

Local choice functions

The following functions are functions the authority has determined should be executive functions under regulation 3(1) and schedule 2 to the regulations;

1. All functions under the County of Merseyside 1980 and other local acts except those relating to licensing, registration and regulatory functions.
2. The functions regarding the conduct of Best Value reviews in accordance with the provisions of any order for the time being having effect under section 5 of the Local Government Act 1999. ***See Schedule 2 Part II (9) - for the role of overview and scrutiny in Best Value reviews.***
3. The appointment of any individual to any office outside the council or to a joint committee in connection with the discharge of functions that are the responsibility of the executive under this schedule or are required to be exercised by the executive under the general law.
4. The making of agreements for the execution of highways works under section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 (as substituted)

SCHEDULE 2

COUNCIL FUNCTIONS

**PART I - Plans and strategies to be
approved by full council**

PART II - Local choice council functions

**PART III - Licensing and regulatory council
Functions**

PART I - Plans and Strategies to be adopted by full Council

1. The following functions regarding the plans and strategies listed below will be council functions:-

- (1) the adoption (with or without modification) of the plan or strategy;
- (2) the giving of instructions requiring the executive to reconsider any draft plan or strategy submitted to the executive for consideration;
- (3) the amendment of any draft plan or strategy submitted to the Council by the executive for consideration.

2. The plans and strategies referred to above are:-

Plans and strategies required to be adopted by full council by regulation 4 and schedule 3 of the regulations:-

- Annual Library Plan;
- Best Value Performance Plan;
- Children's Services Plan;
- Community Care Plan;
- Community Strategy;
- Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy;
- Early Years Development Plan;
- Education Development Plan;
- Plans and Alterations which together comprise the Development Plan;
- Youth Justice Plan

Plans and strategies the council has determined should be council functions under regulation 5(1) and schedule 4 to the regulations, **and reflecting Government Guidance**:-

- the strategy and plan which comprises the Housing Investment Programme ;
- sustainability (or Agenda 21) strategy;
- Lifelong Learning Development Plan;
- Quality Protects Management Action Plan
- the Council's Corporate Plan (if any);
- Local Transport Plan;
- Asset Management Plan

The above plans and strategies will together make up the council's policy framework.

PART II - Local choice council functions

The following are the functions that the council has determined should be council functions under regulation 3(1) and schedule 2 to the regulations.

Function	Comments
1. Any function under the County of Merseyside Act 1980 and other local acts in so far as they relate to licensing, registration and regulatory functions. All other functions under the Act shall be executive functions.	The County of Merseyside Act has provisions regarding registration of night cafes, pleasure boats, etc. which are licensing/registration type and therefore more appropriate for council function.
2. The determination of an appeal against any decision made by or on behalf of the authority.	Most appeals (licensing, registration, etc.) are likely to be of quasi-judicial nature and it is proposed that all appeals are dealt with by appeal tribunals set up from a panel of members as part of the council function.
3. The appointment of review boards under regulations under sub-section (4) of section 34 (determination of claims and reviews) of the Social security Act 1998.	These functions will be transferred to the DSS. The nature of the function is quasi judicial and it is proposed that it remains a council function. It is proposed that there be no change to existing arrangements.
4. The making of arrangements pursuant to sub-section (1) of section 67 of, and Schedule 18 to, the 1998 Act (appeals against exclusion of pupils).	The functions of the council in relation to 4, 5 and 6 are limited to setting up the panels to hear appeals and provide ongoing administrative support. The panels consist of people appointed from outside the council.
5. The making of arrangements pursuant to section 94(1) and (4) of, and Schedule 24 to, the 1998 Act (admission appeals).	See 4 above.

<p>6. The making of arrangements pursuant to section 95(2) of, and Schedule 25 to, the 1998 Act (children to whom section 87 applies: appeals by governing bodies.</p>	<p>See 4 above</p>
<p>7. The making of arrangements under section 20 (questions on police matters at council meetings) of the Police Act 1996 for enabling questions to be put on the discharge of the functions of a police authority.</p>	
<p>8. The making of appointments under paragraphs 2 to 4 (appointment of members by relevant councils) of Schedule 2 (police authorities established under section 3) to the police Act 1996.</p>	
<p>9. The conducting of Best Value reviews in accordance with the provision of any order for the time being having effect under section 5 (best value reviews) of the Local Government Act 1999.</p>	<p>It is proposed that the executive will take overall responsibility and set the framework for Best Value reviews and that overview and scrutiny will also have a key role in the process. Each Best Value review will be assigned to an overview and scrutiny committee and the scoping of the review will be done in consultation with that committee. Approval of the review once it is completed will also be the responsibility of the Cabinet after scrutiny and input from overview and scrutiny committees.</p>
<p>10. Any function relating to contaminated land.</p>	<p>This is a regulatory type function and it is proposed that it remain a council function with responsibility delegated to officers.</p>
<p>11. The discharge of any function relating to the control of pollution or the management of air quality.</p>	<p>It is proposed that this is a council function delegated to officers as it is likely to involve either enforcement or technical monitoring.</p>

12. The service of an abatement notice in respect of a statutory nuisance.	This is an enforcement function and as such more suitable for a council function and delegated to officers.
13. The passing of a resolution that Schedule 2 to the Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act 1993 should apply in the authority's area.	
14. The inspection of the authority's area to detect any statutory nuisance.	Enforcement type function and therefore council function.
15. The investigation of any complaint as to the existence of a statutory nuisance.	Enforcement type function and therefore more suitable as a council function.
16. The obtaining of information under section 330 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as to interests in land.	Enforcement related and therefore should be a council function.
17. The obtaining of particulars of persons interested in land under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.	As for 16 above.
<p>18. The appointment of any individual:-</p> <p>(a) to any office other than an office in which he is employed by the authority;</p> <p>(b) to any body other than:-</p> <p>(i) the authority;</p> <p>(ii) a joint committee of two or more authorities; or</p> <p>(c) to any committee or sub-committee of such a body;</p> <p>and the revocation of any such appointment</p>	In accordance with the Guidance appointments relating to council functions should be a council function and appointments relating to executive functions should be executive functions.

PART III - Mandatory/prescribed council functions

1. Terms and conditions and enforcement of licences and consents

The following functions prescribed by regulation 2 of the regulations shall be council functions:-

- (1) The imposition of any condition limitation or other restriction on approval, consent, licence permission or registration granted under B below or under a local act.
- (2) The function of determining whether, and in what manner to enforce any failure to comply with an approval, consent, etc. or conditions imposed on the approval, consent or licence.
- (3) The function of amending, modifying or varying any such approval, consent, licence, permission or registration.

2. Members' allowances

The following functions prescribed by regulation 2(5) and (6) of the regulations shall be council functions:-

- The function of making a scheme authorised or required by regulations under section 18 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (schemes for basic, attendance and special responsibility allowances for local authority members) or of amending, revoking or replacing any such scheme.
- The function of determining the amount of any allowance payable in respect of the Mayor's and Deputy Mayor's expenses, financial loss allowances and allowances for attending conferences, travelling expenses and subsistence allowances under the Local Government Act 1972.

3. Appointment of committees

The function of making arrangements for the discharge of functions by a committee or an officer under section 101(5) of the Local Government Act 1972 and the making of appointments under section 102 of the Act shall be a council function.

4. Budgets

The function of making a calculation under sections 32 to 37, 43 to 49, 52I, 52T and 52U of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (setting the budget) except the preparation of such estimates of the amounts and submission for consideration by the council (which shall be executive functions) shall be council functions.

5. Authorisation for applications or disposal of property

The function of authorising the executive to make an application for a programme of disposal under sub-section (5) of section 135 of the Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993 and the function of authorising the executive to apply

for consent for disposal of housing land under sections 32 and 43 of the Housing Act 1985 shall be council functions.

6. Determinations contrary to policy or budget framework

Where the executive is minded to make a determination which is inconsistent with any plan or strategy required to be approved by the council, the making of that determination shall be a council function except that, in case of urgency, the executive may make the determination providing the relevant chair of overview and scrutiny agrees that it is urgent and reasonable in all the circumstances. (Regulation 5 of the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations. It is anticipated that best practice will dictate that the Mayor will also be consulted in these circumstances.

7. Miscellaneous Licensing and Regulatory Functions

The following functions, being functions prescribed under regulation 2(1) and schedule 1 to the regulations, will be council functions.

Function	Provision of Act or Statutory Instrument
A. Functions relating to town and country planning and development control	
1. Power to determine application for planning permission.	Sections 70(1)(a) and (b) and 72 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (c.8).
2. Power to determine applications to develop land without compliance with conditions previously attached.	Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
3. Power to grant planning permission for development already carried out.	Section 73A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

4. Power to decline to determine application for planning permission.	Section 70A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
5. Duties relating to the making of determinations of planning applications.	Section 69, 76 and 92 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and Articles 8, 10 to 13, 15 to 22 and 25 and 26 of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (S.I. 1995/419) and directions made thereunder.
6. Power to determine application for planning permission made by a local authority, alone or jointly with another person.	Section 316 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992 (S.I. 1992/1492).
7. Power to make determinations, give approvals and agree certain other matters relating to the exercise of permitted development.	Parts 6, 7, 11, 17, 19, 20, 21 to 24, 26, 30 and 31 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (S.I. 1995/418).
8. Power to enter into agreement regulating development or use of land.	Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
9. Power to issue a certificate of existing or proposed lawful use or development.	Sections 191(4) and 192(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
10. Power to serve a completion notice.	Section 94(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
11. Power to grant consent for the display of advertisements.	Section 220 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992.

12. Power to authorise entry onto land.	Section 196A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
13. Power to require the discontinuance of a use of land.	Section 102 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
14. Power to serve a planning contravention notice, breach of condition notice or stop notice.	Sections 171C, 187A and 183(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
15. Power to issue an enforcement notice.	Section 172 of the Town and Country Planning act 1990.
16. Power to apply for an injunction restraining a breach of planning control.	Section 187B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
17. Power to determine application for hazardous substances consent, and related power.	Section 9(1) and 10 of the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 (c. 10).
18. Duty to determine conditions to which old mining permissions, relevant planning permissions relating to dormant sites or active Phase I or II sites, or mineral permissions relating to mining sites, as the case may be, are to be subject.	Paragraphs 2(6)(a) of Schedule 2 to the Planning and Compensation Act 1991, paragraph 9(6) of Schedule 13 to the Environment Act 1995 (c. 25) and paragraph 6(5)
19. Power to require proper maintenance of land.	Section 215(1) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
20. Power to determine application for listed building consent, and related powers.	Section 16(1) and (2), 17, 27(2) and 33(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Buildings in Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (c.9).

<p>21. Power to determine applications for conservation area consent.</p>	<p>Section 16(1) of the Planning (Listed Building and Buildings in Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as applied by section 74(3) of that Act.</p>
<p>22. Duties relating to applications for listed building consent and conservations area consent.</p>	<p>Sections 13(1) and 14(1) and (4) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Buildings in Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and regulations 2 to 6 and 13 of the Town and Country Planning (Listed Buildings and Buildings in Conservation Areas) Regulations 1990 and paragraphs 8, 15 and 22 of Department of the Environment Circulate 14/97.</p>
<p>23. Power to serve a building preservation notice, and related powers.</p>	<p>Sections 3(1) and 4(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Buildings in Conservation Areas) Act 1990.</p>
<p>24. Power to issue enforcement notice in relation to demolition of unlisted building in conservation area.</p>	<p>Section 38 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Buildings in Conservation Areas) Act 1990.</p>
<p>25. Powers to acquire a listed building in need of repair and to serve a repairs notice.</p>	<p>Sections 47 and 48 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Buildings in Conservation Areas) Act 1990.</p>
<p>26. Power to apply for an injunction in relation to a listed building.</p>	<p>Section 44A of the Planning (listed Buildings and Buildings in Conservation Areas) Act 1990.</p>
<p>27. Power to execute urgent works.</p>	<p>Section 54 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Buildings in Conservation Areas) Act 1990.</p>

B. Licensing and registration functions (in so far as not covered by any other paragraph of this Appendix)	
1. Power to issue licences authorising the use of land as a caravan site ("site licences").	Section 3(3) of the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 (c. 62).
2. power to licence the use of moveable dwellings and camping sites.	Section 269(1) of the Public Health act 1936 (c.49).
3. Power to licence hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.	(a) As to hackney carriages, the Town Police Clauses Act 1847 (10 and 11 Vict. c. 89), as extended by section 171 of the Public Health Act 1875 (38 and 39 Vict. c. 55), and section n15 of the Transport Act 1985 (c. 67); and sections 47, 57, 58, 60 and 79 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 (c. 57); (b) as to private hire vehicles, sections 48, 57, 58 60 and 79 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 .
4. Power to licence drivers of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.	Sections 51, 53, 54, 59, 61 and 79 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
5. Power to licence operators of hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.	Sections 55 to 58, 62 and 79 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
6. Power to register pool promoters.	Schedule 2 to the Betting, Gaming and Lotteries Act 1963 (c. 2).
7. power to grant track betting licences.	Schedule 3 to the Betting, Gaming and Lotteries Act 1963.

8. Power to licence inter-track betting schemes.	Schedule 5ZA to the Betting, Gaming and Lotteries Act 1963.
9. Power to grant permits in respect of premises with amusement machines.	Schedule 9 to the Gaming Act 1968 (c. 65).
10. Power to register societies wishing to promote lotteries.	Schedule 1 to the Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976 (c. 32).
11. Power to grant permits in respect of premises where amusements with prizes are provided.	Schedule 3 to the Lotteries and Amusements Act 1976.
12. Power to issue cinema and cinema club licences.	Section 1 of the Cinema Act 1985 (c. 13).
13. Power to issue theatre licences.	Sections 12 to 14 of the Theatres Act 1968 (c. 54).
14. Power to issue entertainment licences.	Section 12 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (c. 12), section 52 of, and Schedule 12 to, the London Government Act 1963 (c. 33), section 79 of the Licensing Act 1964 (c. 26), sections 1 to 5 and 7 of, and Part I and II of the Schedule to, the Private Places of Entertainment (Licensing) Act 1967 (c. 19) and Part 1 of, and Schedules 1 and 2 to, the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 (c. 30).
15. Power to licence sex shops and sex cinemas.	The Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982, section 2 and Schedule 3.
16. Power to licence performances of hypnotism.	The Hypnotism Act 1952 (c. 46).

17. Power to licence premises for acupuncture, tattooing ear-piercing and electrolysis.	Sections 13 to 17 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982.
18. Power to licence pleasure boats and pleasure vessels.	Section 94 of the Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907 (c. 53).
19. Power to register door staff.	Paragraphs 1(2) and 9 of Schedule 12 to the London government Act 1963 (c. 33) and Part V of the London Local Authorities Act 1995 (c. x).
20. Power to licence market and street trading	Part III of, and Schedule 4 to, the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982, Part III of the London Local Authorities Act 1990 (c. viii) and section 6 of the London Local authority Act 1994 (c. xii).
21. Power to licence night cafes and take-away food shops.	Section 2 of the Late Night Refreshment Houses Act 1969 (c. 53), Part II of the London Local Authorities Act 1990 and section 5 of the London Local Authorities Act 1994.
22. Duty to keep list of persons entitled to sell non-medicinal poisons.	Sections 3(10)(b)(ii), 5, 6 and 11 of the Poisons Act 1972 (c. 66).
23. Power to licence dealers in game and killing and selling of game.	Sections 5, 6, 17, 18 and 21 to 23 of the Game Act 1831 (c. 32); sections 2 to 16 of the Game Licensing Act 1860 (c. 90), section 4 of the Customs and Inland Revenue Act 1883 (c. 10), sections 12(3) and 27 of the Local Government Act 1874 (c. 73), and section 2313 of the Local Government Act 1972 (c. 70).
24. Power to register and licence premises for the preparation of food.	Section 19 of the Food Safety Act 1990 (c. 16).

25. Power to licence scrap yards.	Section 1 of the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 1964 (c. 69).
26. Power to issue, amend or replace safety certificates (whether general or special) for sports grounds.	The Safety of Sports Grounds Act 19975 (c. 52).
27. Power to issue, cancel, amend or replace safety certificates for regulated stands at sports grounds.	Part III of the Fire Safety and Safety of Places of Sport ct 19987 (c. 27).
28. Power to issue fire certificates.	Section 5 of the Fire Precautions Act 1971 (c. 40).
29. Power to licence premises for the breeding of dogs.	Section 1 of the Breeding of Dogs Act 1973 (c. 60) and section 1 of the Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999 (c. 11).
30. Power to licence pet shops and other establishments where animals are bred or kept for the purposes of carrying on a business.	Section 1 of the Pet Animals Act 1951 (c. 35); section 1 of the Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963 (c. 43); the Riding Establishments Acts 1964 and 1970 (1964 c. 70 and 1970 c. 70); section 1 of the Breeding of Dogs Act 1973 (c. 60), and sections 1 and 8 of the Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999).
31. Power to register animal trainers and exhibitors.	Section 1 of the Performing Animal (Regulation) Act 1925 (c. 38).
32. Power to licence zoos.	Section 1 of the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 (c. 37).
33. Power to licence dangerous wild animals.	Section 1 of the Dangerous Wild animals Act 1976 (c. 38).

34. Power to licence knackers' yards.	Section 4 of the Slaughterhouses Act 1974. See also the Animal By-Products Order 1999 (S.I. 1999/646).
35. Power to licence the employment of children.	Part II of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (c. 33), byelaws made under that Part, and Part II of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 (c. 37).
36. Power to approve premises for the solemnisation of marriages.	Section 46A of the Marriage Act 1949 (c. 76) and the Marriages (Approved Premises) Regulations 1995 (S.I. 1995/510).
<p>37. Power to register common land or town or village greens, except where the power is exercisable solely for the purposes of giving effect to:-</p> <p>(a) an exchange of lands effected by an order under section 19(3) of, or paragraph 6(4) of Schedule 3 to, the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 (c. 67); or</p> <p>(b) an order under section 147 of the Enclosure Act 1845 (c. 8 and 9 Vict. c. 118).</p>	Regulation 6 of the Commons Registration (New Land) Regulations 1969 (S.I. 1969/1843).
38. Power to register variation of rights of common.	Regulation 29 of the Commons Registration (General) Regulations 1966 (S.I. 1966/1471).
39. Power to licence persons to collect for charitable and other causes.	Section 5 of the police, Factories, etc. (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1916 (c. 31) and section 2 of the House to House Collections Act 1939 (c. 44).
40. Power to grant consent for the operation of loudspeaker.	Schedule 2 to the Noise and Statutory Nuisance Act 1993 (c. 40).

41. Power to grant a street works licence.	Section 50 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 (c. 22).
42. Power to licence agencies for the supply of nurses.	Section 2 of the Nurses Agencies Act 1957 (c. 16).
43. Power to issue licences for the movement of pigs.	Article 12 of the Pigs (Records, Identification and movement) Order 1995 (S.I. 1995/11).
44. Power to licence the sale of pigs.	Article 13 of the Pigs (Records, Identification and Moveement) Order 1995.
45. Power to licence collecting centres for the movement of pigs.	Article 14 of the Pigs (Records, Identification and Movement) Order 1995.
46. Power to issue a licence to move cattle from a market.	Article 5(2) of the Cattle Identification Regulations 1998 (S.I. 1998/871).
47. Power to permit deposit of builder's skip on highway.	Section 139 of the Highways Act 1980 (c. 66).
48. Power to licence planting retention and maintenance of tress etc. in part of highway.	Section 142 of the Highways Act 1980.
49. Power to authorise erection of stiles, etc. on footpaths or bridleways.	Section147 of the Highways Act 1980
50. Power to licence works in relation to buildings, etc. which obstruct the highway	Section 169 of the Highways Act 1980.
51. Power to consent to temporary deposits or excavations in streets.	Section 171 of the Highways Act 1980.

52. Power to dispense with obligation to erect hoarding or fence.	Section 172 of the Highways Act 1980.
53. Power to restrict the placing of rails, beams, etc. over highway.	Section 178 of the Highways Act 1980.
54. Power to consent to construction of cellars, etc. under street.	Section 179 of the Highways Act 1980.
55. Power to consent to the making of openings into cellars, etc. under streets, and pavements lights and ventilators.	Section 180 of the Highways Act 1980.
56. Power to sanction use of parts of buildings for storage of celluloid.	Section 1 of the Celluloid and Cinematograph Film Act 1922 (c. 35).
57. Power to approve meat product premises.	Regulations 4 and 5 of the Meat Products (Hygiene) Regulations 1994 (S.I. 1994/3082).
58. Power to approve premises for the production of minced meat or meat preparation.	Regulation 4 of the Minced Meat and Meat Preparation (Hygiene) Regulations 1995 (S.I. 1995/3205).
59. Power to approve dairy establishments.	Regulations 6 and 7 of the Dairy Products (Hygiene) Regulations 1995 (S.I. 1995/1086).
60. Power to approve egg product establishments.	Regulation 5 of the Egg Products Regulations 1993 (S.I. 1993/1520).
61. Power to issue licences to retail butchers' shops carrying out commercial operations in relation to unwrapped raw meat and selling or supplying both raw meat and ready-to-eat foods.	Schedule 1A to the Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995 (S.I. 1995/1763)
62. Power to approve fish products premises.	Regulation 24 of the Food Safety (Fishery products and live Shellfish) (Hygiene) Regulations 1998 (S.I. 1998/994).

63. Power to approve dispatch or purification centres	Regulation 11 of the Food Safety (Fishery products and Live Shellfish) (Hygiene) Regulations 1998.
64. Power to register fishing vessels on board which shrimps or molluscs are cooked.	Regulation 21 of the Food Safety (Fishery Products and Live Shellfish) (Hygiene) Regulations 1998.
65. Power to approve factory vessels and fishery product establishments.	Regulation 24 of the Food Safety (Fishery Products and Live Shellfish) (Hygiene) Regulations 1998.
66. Power to register auction and wholesale markets.	Regulation 26 of the Food Safety (Fishery Products and Live Shellfish) (Hygiene) Regulations 1998.
67. Duty to keep register of food business premises.	Regulation 5 of the Food Premises (Registration) Regulations 1991 (S.I. 1991/2828).
68. Power to register food business premises.	Regulation 9 of the Food Premises (Registration) Regulations 1991.
C. Functions relating to health and safety at work	
Functions under any of the “relevant statutory provisions” within the meaning of Part I (Health, Safety and Welfare in connection with work, and control of dangerous substances) of the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act `974, to the extent that those functions are discharged otherwise than in the authority’s capacity as an employer.	Part 1 of the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974 (c. 37).
D. Functions relation to elections	
1. Duty to appoint an electoral registration officer.	Section 892) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 (c. 2).
2. Power to assign officers in relation to requisitions of the registration officer.	Section 52(4) of the Representation of the People Act 1983.

3. Functions in relation to parishes and parish councils.	Part II of the Local Government and Rating Act 1997 (c. 29) and subordinate legislation under that Part.
4. Power to dissolve small parish councils.	Section 10 of the Local Government Act 1972.
5. Power to make orders for grouping parishes, dissolving groups and separating parishes from groups.	Section 11 of the Local Government Act 1972.
6. Duty to appoint returning officer for local government elections.	Section 35 of the Representation of the People Act 1983.
7. Duty to provide assistance at European Parliamentary elections	Paragraph 4(3) and (4) of the Schedule 1 to the European Parliamentary Elections Act 1978 (c.10).
8. Duty to divide constituency into polling districts.	Section 18 of the Representation of the People Act 1983.
9. Power to divide electoral divisions into polling districts at local government elections.	Section 31 of the Representation of the People Act 1983.
10. Powers in respect of holding of elections.	Section 39(4) of the Representation of the People Act 1983.

11. Power to pay expenses properly incurred by electoral registration officer.	Section 54 of the Representation of the People Act 1983.
12. Power to fill vacancies in the event of insufficient nominations.	Section 21 of the Representation of the People Act 1985.
13. Duty to declare vacancy in office in certain cases.	Section 86 of the Local Government Act 1972.
14. Duty to give public notice of a casual vacancy.	Section 87 of the local Government Act 1972,
15. Power to make temporary appointments to parish councils.	Section 91 of the local Government Act 1972.
16. Power to determine fees and conditions for supply of copies of, or extracts from, elections documents.	Rule 48(3) of the Local Elections (Principal Areas) les 1986 (S.I. 1986/2214) and rule 48(3) of the Local Elections (Parishes and Communities) Rules 1986 (S.I. 1986/2215).
17. Power to submit proposals to the Secretary of State for an order under section 10 (Pilot Scheme for Local Elections in England and Wales) of the Representation of the People Act 2000.	Section 10 of the Representation of the People Act 2000 (c. 2).
E. Functions relating to names and status of areas and individuals	
1. Power to change the name of a county, district or London Borough.	Section 74 of the Local Government Act 1972.
2. Power to change the name of a parish	Section 75 of the Local Government Act 1972.

3. Power to confer title of honorary alderman/woman or to admit to be an honorary freeman/women.	Section 249 of the Local Government act 1972.
4. Power to petition for a charter to confer borough status.	Section 245b of the Local Government Act 1972.
F. Power to make, amend, revoke or re-enact byelaws.	Any provision of any enactment (including a local Act), whenever passed, and section 14 of the Interpretation Act 1978 (c. 30).
G. Power to promote or oppose local or personal Bills.	Section 239 of the Local Government Act 1972.
H. Functions relating to pensions, etc.	
1. Functions relating to local government pensions, etc.	Regulations under section 7, 12 or 24 of the Superannuation Act 1972 (c. 11).
2. Functions under the Firemen's Pension Scheme relating to pensions, etc. as respects persons employed as members of fire brigades maintained pursuant to section 4 of the Fire Services Act 1947.	Section 26 of the Fire services Act 1947 (10 and 11 Geo. 6 c. 41).
I. Miscellaneous functions	
1. Power to create footpaths and bridleways.	Section 26 of the Highways Act 1980 (c. 66).
2. Power to stop up footpaths and bridleways.	Section 118 of the Highways Act 1980.

3. Power to divert footpaths and bridleways.	Section 119 of the Highways Act 1980.
4. Duty to assert and protect the rights of the public to use and enjoyment of the highways.	Section 130 of the Highways Act 1980.
5. Power relating to removal of things so deposited on highways as to be a nuisance.	Section 149 of the Highways Act 1980.
6. Duty to keep a definitive map and statement under review.	Section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (c. 69).
7. Duty to reclassify roads used as public paths.	Section 54 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
8. Duty to approve authority's statement of accounts, income and expenditure and balance sheet or record of receipts and payments (as the case may be).	The Accounts and Audit Regulations 1996 (S.I. 1996/590).
9. Functions relating to sea fisheries.	Sections 1, 2, 10 ad 19 of the Sea Fisheries Regulations Act 1966 (c. 38)
10. Power relating to the preservations of trees.	Sections 197 to 214D of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Trees Regulations 1999 (S.I. 1999/1892)
11. Powers relating to the protection of important hedgerows.	The Hedgerows Regulations 1997 (S.I. 1997/1160)
12. Power to make limestone pavement order.	Section 32(2) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (c. 69).

13. Power to make standing orders.	Section 106 of, and paragraph 42 of Schedule 12 to, the Local Government Act 1972.
14. Power to appoint staff.	
15. Power to make standing orders as to contracts.	Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972.
16. Power to make payments or provide other benefits in cases of maladministration etc.	Section 92 of the Local Government Act 2000



**Metropolitan
Borough of Wirral**

New Council Constitutions:

Wirral's Consultation Regarding the Modernisation of Local Democracy

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Summary of Results

Stage 1

Quantitative Research:

- Overall, a quarter of the respondents (24.6%) said a cabinet and leader would be the best model for Wirral, a fifth (20.8%) said their preferred option was the directly elected Mayor, while an eighth (12.6%) wanted a directly elected Mayor and Council Manager.
- Almost three in ten respondents (28.4%) said that they did not know enough the models to choose one over another, and more than an eighth (13.5%) had no preference.
- Three in ten respondents (30.7%) said that they were either very well informed (3.8%) or quite well informed (26.9%) about the Government's proposals to modernise local government. Seven in ten respondents (69.2%) were either not very well informed (46.8%) or not informed at all (22.4%).
- Two fifths (41.6%) of respondents agreed (26.0%) or strongly agreed (15.6%) that there is a strong case for changing the current political structures in Wirral. Almost a fifth (18.4%) disagreed (13.2%) or strongly disagreed (5.2%).
- A quarter of the respondents (25.6%) said that a Mayor and Cabinet, and approximately a fifth said that a Mayor and Council Manager (21.9%) or a Cabinet and Leader (18.5%), would be better than the current Committee structures.
- A quarter of the respondents (24.5%) said that the Mayor and Council Manager, and more than a fifth (21.9%) said the Mayor and Cabinet would be worse than the Committee structures. One in six respondents (16.6%) said that the Cabinet and Leader would be worse than the Committee structure.
- Almost half (46.1%) of the respondents said that a Cabinet and Leader, and a third said the Mayor and Cabinet (33.1%) or Mayor and Council Manager (32.2%) structures would not make any difference in comparison to the present Committee structures.
- With each model approximately a fifth of the respondents said that they did not know whether the model would be better, worse or no different from the present Committee structure.

Qualitative Research:

- Members of focus group A (with citizens' panel members) were all in support of a directly elected Mayor. Most supported a Mayor with Cabinet although some preferred a Council Manager.
- There was universal desire to see local government move away from party politics.
- Members of focus group B with (citizens' panel members) were divided in their choice of preferred option. There was support for a directly elected Mayor (again more of these members preferred the Mayor and Cabinet Model rather than the Mayor and Council Manager model). However, there was also strong support expressed for a Leader and Cabinet and particular concerns about the ultimate power of an elected Mayor.
- Supporters of the Mayoral system believed that a Mayor could potentially bring change to the area and generate more local interest in the Council.
- Focus groups were also convened with disability and Multicultural groups. These were more concerned with the more the services they received from the Council. No strong preferences were expressed in either group.

Stage 2:

- More than four in five respondents (83.2%) said that the members of the cabinet should be chosen by the whole Council.
- Almost three fifths (56.8%) of the overall respondents said that they would prefer nine members of the Cabinet.
- The areas most respondents wish to see covered by a Cabinet portfolio were education (93.1%), social services (91.4%) and the environment (89.1%).
- Almost two thirds of the overall respondents (64.7%) wanted the whole Council to decide which members of the Cabinet are responsible for specific portfolios.
- Most respondents would prefer to have a small number of scrutiny committees. More than three fifths (62.6%) of the overall respondents would prefer to have between one and four scrutiny committees

- Almost nine out of ten respondents (86.7%) wanted area committees to consult local people and provide the whole Council with information about the needs of local communities. A third of the respondents (33.1%) wanted area committees to make decisions which relate to local communities.

Survey Background and Methodology

Introduction

The Local Government Act 2000 places a duty on local authorities to consult on the Government's proposed changes to political management. The *New Council Constitutions: Local Government Act 2000, Guidance to English Local Authorities*, offers guidance and direction in how local authorities should consult. In particular it shows that authorities must:

- Represent each of the available forms of the executive (Mayor and Cabinet, Mayor and Council Manager and Cabinet and Leader) in a fair and balanced way.
- Provide an opportunity for consultees to express a preference for any of those forms of executive.
- Provide an opportunity for all local people and other interested parties to respond to the consultation.
- Use both qualitative and quantitative methods of consultation.

In addition the LGA set fourteen principles for consultation (summarised below) on local governance:

Inclusive: Ensuring all sections of the community in the borough are given a chance to express their views.

Open: Providing real choices to allow the development of structures that are responsive to peoples' needs.

Impartial: Not leading people into giving a preferred response.

Informative: Giving enough information to allow people to reach an informed decision.

Understandable: Using clear and understandable language, and providing translations if required.

Appropriate: Using both qualitative and quantitative research techniques, and targeting the "hard to reach" groups.

Strategic: Consultation about local democracy should be part of a strategic approach to consultation on other issues.

Joined up: Informing communities about how changes will help to deliver more efficient and effective local services.

Resourced: Providing sufficient human and financial resources to ensure the consultation is rigorous.

Professional: Ensuring the consultation is rigorous and robust allowing all parties to be confident in the results.

Timely: Ensuring consultation is conducted at appropriate times, and sufficient time is allowed for people to respond.

Listened to: Providing Councillors with real information on which they can base their decisions.

Reported: Feeding back the consultation results to the communities and respondents, and demonstrating that their views have been listened to.

Methodology (stage 1):

The consultation methodology used by Wirral MBC incorporated a range of techniques. On one hand it was deemed important that any stakeholder with an interest in local democracy should be able to contribute

their views. For this to be possible, the consultation would have to be wide ranging and easily accessible. On the other hand, it was also important that the consultation should take into account the views of a representative cross section of the borough, rather than solely relying on the opinions of only those interested enough in local democracy to complete a questionnaire (for example). For this reason some techniques which limited self selection would also have to be adopted.

The Wirral Citizens' Panel is a group of 2400 Wirral residents, selected using a stratified random sample to be demographically representative of Wirral's population (according to the 1991 census). The Citizens' Panel receive four questionnaires per year. The panel is co-ordinated by an independent research organisation, Merseyside Information Service (MIS).

A questionnaire and information sheet would be mailed to each panel member. A direct mail-out to named addressees, is more likely to result in a higher response rate (thereby limiting self selection). In addition, because the panel is recruited to be demographically representative, the Citizens' Panel was therefore the focus of Wirral's statistically valid quantitative research. The panel mail-out, fieldwork, coding, and analysis would be co-ordinated and managed by MIS.

It was also important to allow any other stakeholders to contribute their views. Although the Citizens' Panel was more *statistically* valid than other techniques, the Council wanted to allow anyone else in the borough to have a say. To do this, a range of other quantitative techniques were also used.

The *Wirral Now* is a Council supplement which features on a monthly basis in a local free paper, the *Wirral Globe*, which is delivered to each household in the district. A questionnaire based on the Citizens' Panel questionnaire and relevant information, featured in the October 2000 *Wirral Now*. Respondents could complete the questionnaire and send it via freepost to MIS, who would code and analyse the questionnaires. It was hoped that the use of *Wirral Now* would allow any residents with an interest to take part in the consultation.

Posters explaining the proposed changes to local democracy were also displayed in the borough's Libraries, One-stop-shops and Information Centres. Visitors to these sites could take a questionnaire and information sheet and contribute their views. Again the completed questionnaires were returned via freepost to MIS for coding and analysis.

The questionnaire was also placed on the Council's web-site. Visitors to the web-site could complete it and send it via e-mail to a central database for analysis.

It was also deemed important to obtain the views of local businesses and organisations. The Council maintains a database of 1374 local businesses and organisations, including organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors, schools and colleges. These businesses and organisations were sent copies of the questionnaire and information sheet, which could be sent via freepost to MIS for coding and analysis.

In addition to the quantitative research, a series of focus groups were convened in order to generate qualitative information. These were facilitated by the Deputy Borough Solicitor and the Senior Research and Information Officer. Further details are shown in the section on Qualitative Research.

Methodology (stage 2):

The first stage of Wirral's consultation was concerned with deciding which political model the Council would adopt. In addition to this, it was deemed important that input should be sought on some of the more detailed issues about the working of the new structure.

A second stage of consultation was commissioned to explore views about the way the new political system would operate. A questionnaire was designed to determine opinions about preferred number of cabinet members, who should select them and what their portfolios should cover; the number and the role of scrutiny committees; and the duties to be performed by the area structures, the remaining committees and the Councillors.

The questionnaire was delivered to every Wirral household in the April edition of *Wirral Now*. Respondents could complete the questionnaire and send in via freepost to MIS who coded the questionnaires. In addition to this, the questionnaires were mailed out to the businesses, organisations and schools appearing on

Wirral's consultation database. Again the questionnaire could be sent to MIS free of charge. Posters were also displayed in libraries, one stop shops and information centres where people could collect a questionnaire and return it via free post.

Because of the reliance on self selection for the *Wirral Now* and library, one stop shop etc. questionnaires, this data is not statistically robust. Because it is not based on a sample, confidence intervals do not apply. The data does however provide useful indicative results.

Response Rates:

Stage 1: A total of 1,064 citizens' panel questionnaires were returned. This represents a response rate of 44.3%. A total of 436 *Wirral Now*, 48 library/one stop shop, 98 organisation/business (a response rate of 7.1%) questionnaires were returned, with a further 11 responses via the internet. In total 1,657 responses were received during the first stage of consultation. This response rate is somewhat disappointing. The response from the citizens' panel was the lowest so far (the panel has consistently achieved response rates of 60-65%). This is perhaps indicative of public apathy towards the subject matter, or confusion around some of the options.

Stage2: A total of questionnaires were returned from businesses/organisations/schools etc. This represents a response rate of % (the base number differs for this percentage in comparison to the total used in the first stage of consultation, because as a result of stage 1 a number of 'deadwood' addresses (organisations that had closed, moved away etc) were removed from the database).

A total of individual (*Wirral Now*, or libraries, one stop shops) stage 2 questionnaires were returned.

Presentation of Results

In this report, the term 'valid respondents' is used and refers to the number of respondents that answered any given question. This is often not the total number of respondents overall, as not all the questions apply to each respondent and not every respondents answered each question. The term 'valid responses' applies to questions in which respondents could give more than one response, and refers to the total number of responses received for that questions.

All percentages are subject to rounding, and therefore do not always sum 100.0%.

The consultation regarding the modernisation of local democracy was designed to be incorporated into a 'joined up' approach to consultation on other issues. In November 1999, the citizen's panel were asked a series of questions about the role of the Council and the decision making structure. The questions appearing in the local democracy relate directly to these questions. This report therefore contains some results of the November 1999 survey, so that a direct comparison can be made between the previous structure and the potential changes that may be made as a result of adopting the three political models.

Confidence Levels

As with most surveys, the results presented here are based on a sample of respondents rather than the answers given by the entire population. The figures shown in the tables of this report have differed if every resident had completed this survey. A degree of sampling error therefore applies to these results. The degree of sampling error for each particular percentage depends on the size of the percentage itself (table 1 gives a general indication of the accuracy of the results presented in this report).

Table 1

Sampling errors of a simple random sample:

(Range of answers in 95 cases out of 100)
PERCENTAGE WITH A CHARACTERISTIC

Size of base	95 or 5	90 or 10	85 or 15	80 or 20	75 or 25	70 or 30	65 or 35	60 or 40	55 or 45	50 or 50
	+ or - %	+ or - %	+ or - %	+ or - %	+ or - %	+ or - %	+ or - %	+ or - %	+ or - %	+ or - %
50	6.0	8.3	9.9	11.1	12.0	12.7	13.2	13.6	13.8	13.9
60	5.5	7.6	9.0	10.1	11.0	11.6	12.1	12.4	12.6	12.7
70	5.1	7.0	8.4	9.4	10.1	10.7	11.2	11.5	11.7	11.7
80	4.8	6.6	7.8	8.8	9.5	10.0	10.5	10.7	10.9	11.0
90	4.5	6.2	7.4	8.3	8.9	9.5	9.9	10.1	10.3	10.3
100	4.3	5.9	7.0	7.8	8.5	9.0	9.3	9.6	9.8	9.8
125	3.8	5.3	6.3	7.0	7.6	8.0	8.4	8.6	8.7	8.8
150	3.5	4.8	5.7	6.4	6.9	7.3	7.6	7.8	8.0	8.0
175	3.2	4.4	5.3	5.9	6.4	6.8	7.1	7.3	7.4	7.4
200	3.0	4.2	4.9	5.5	6.0	6.4	6.6	6.8	6.9	6.9
250	2.7	3.7	4.4	5.0	5.4	5.7	5.9	6.1	6.2	6.2
300	2.5	3.4	4.0	4.5	4.9	5.2	5.4	5.5	5.6	5.7
350	2.3	3.1	3.7	4.2	4.5	4.8	5.0	5.1	5.2	5.2
400	2.1	2.9	3.5	3.9	4.2	4.5	4.7	4.8	4.9	4.9
500	1.9	2.6	3.1	3.5	3.8	4.0	4.2	4.3	4.4	4.4
600	1.7	2.4	2.9	3.2	3.5	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.0	4.0
700	1.6	2.2	2.6	3.0	3.2	3.4	3.5	3.6	3.7	3.7
800	1.5	2.1	2.5	2.8	3.0	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.4	3.5
900	1.4	2.0	2.3	2.6	2.8	3.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.3
1000	1.4	1.9	2.2	2.5	2.7	2.8	3.0	3.0	3.1	3.1
2000	1.0	1.3	1.6	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.1	2.2	2.2
3000	0.8	1.1	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.8
4000	0.7	0.9	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5

For example in the question **Overall, how well informed do you feel about the Government’s proposals to modernise local democracy?**, 71.1% of the 1061 valid respondents from the Citizens’ Panel answered ‘not very well informed’ or ‘not informed at all’.

Therefore:

sampling error + or – 2.8%

so “true” percentage 71.1% + or – 2.8% (or between 68.3% and 73.9%)

The range in which any of the percentages really lies may be estimated from the reported percentages and the number of valid respondents.

Stage 1:
Quantitative Results

Overall, how well informed do you feel about the Government’s proposals to modernise local government?

	well informed		Quite well informed		Not very well informed		Not informed at all	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Citizen’s Panel (1061)	39	3.7	267	25.2	502	47.3	253	23.8
<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (429)	15	3.5	131	30.5	199	46.4	84	19.6
Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (48)	2	4.2	9	18.8	21	43.8	16	33.3
Businesses & organisations (98)	5	5.1	33	33.7	45	45.9	15	15.3
Internet visitors(10)	2	20.0	3	30.0	4	40.0	1	10.0
Overall (1646)	63	3.8	443	26.9	771	46.8	369	22.4

* Size of base sample for percentages is given in brackets

Overall, three in ten respondents (30.7%) said they were either very well informed (3.8%) or quite well informed (26.9%) about the Government’s proposals to modernise local government. Almost seven in ten respondents (69.2%) were either not very well informed (46.8%) or not informed at all (22.4%).

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “There is a strong case for changing the current political structures in Wirral”?

	Strongly Agree (%)		Agree (%)		Neither (%)		Disagree (%)		Strongly Disagree (%)		Don’t Know (%)	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Citizen’s Panel (1059)	108	10.2	264	24.9	341	32.2	139	13.1	33	3.1	174	16.4
<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (426)	109	25.6	119	27.9	55	12.9	61	14.3	35	8.2	47	11.0
Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (48)	20	41.7	13	27.1	3	6.3	3	6.3	4	8.3	5	10.4
Businesses & organisations (97)	17	17.5	30	30.9	22	22.7	13	13.4	12	12.4	3	3.1
Internet visitors (10)	6	60.0	0	0	2	20.0	0	0	1	10.0	1	10.0
Overall (1640)	260	15.6	426	26.0	423	25.8	216	13.2	85	5.2	230	14.0

* Size of base sample for percentages is given in brackets

Two fifths (41.6%) of the overall respondents agreed (26.0%) or strongly agreed (15.6%) that there is a strong case for changing the current political structures in Wirral. Almost a fifth (18.4%) disagreed (13.2%) or strongly disagreed (5.2%) with the statement, whereas a further two fifths (39.8%) either stated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement (25.8%) or did not know (14.0%).

The group with the largest proportion of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the statement, were respondents completing questionnaires from libraries, One-stop-shops and Information centres. More than two thirds (68.8%) of these respondents agreed (27.1%) or strongly agreed (41.7%). Other groups of respondents with high proportions of agreement were Internet visitors (60.0% strongly agreed) and *Wirral Now* readers (53.5% agreed or strongly agreed).

The group of respondents with the highest proportion of disagreement with the statement were businesses and organisations; a quarter (25.8%) of these respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed).

The group of respondents with perhaps the greatest degree of apathy and neutrality towards the statement were the Citizens’ Panel. Nearly half (48.6%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed (32.2%) with the statement or did not know (16.4%). Other groups of respondents with relatively high proportions neither agreeing nor disagreeing or stating ‘don’t know’ were internet visitors (30.0%) and businesses and organisations (25.8%).

Do you think that under any of the Government's three proposed models, the Council will be less remote and impersonal?

		Yes, will be less remote and impersonal		No, will be more remote and impersonal		Will make no difference		Don't know	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Cabinet with Leader	Citizen's Panel (1007)	131	13.0	186	18.5	421	41.8	269	26.7
	<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (364)	61	16.8	89	24.5	171	47.0	43	11.8
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (46)	7	15.2	11	23.9	23	50.0	5	10.9
	Businesses & organisations (93)	28	30.1	23	24.7	33	35.5	9	9.7
	Internet visitors (9)	2	22.2	3	33.3	3	33.3	1	11.1
	Overall (1519)	229	15.1	312	20.5	651	42.9	327	21.5
Elected Mayor plus Cabinet	Citizen's Panel (1008)	223	22.1	185	18.4	325	32.2	275	27.3
	<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (372)	109	29.3	110	29.6	100	26.9	53	14.2
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (42)	14	33.3	12	28.6	11	26.2	5	11.9
	Businesses & organisations (87)	30	34.5	20	23.0	28	32.2	9	10.3
	Internet visitors (10)	6	60.0	1	10.0	2	20.0	1	10.0
	Overall (1519)	382	25.1	328	21.6	466	30.7	343	22.6
Elected Mayor with Council Manager	Citizen's Panel (999)	175	17.5	214	21.4	331	33.1	279	27.9
	<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (372)	87	23.4	131	35.2	101	27.2	53	14.2
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (43)	14	32.6	10	23.3	13	30.2	6	14.0
	Businesses & organisations (89)	22	24.7	31	34.8	26	29.2	10	11.2
	Internet visitors (9)	3	33.3	2	22.2	2	22.2	2	22.2
	Overall (1512)	301	19.9	388	25.7	473	31.3	350	23.1

* Size of base sample for percentages is given in brackets

More than one in seven respondents (15.1%) said that the Council would be less remote and impersonal with a Cabinet and Leader, a quarter (25.1%) said it would be less remote with a directly elected Mayor and Cabinet, and a fifth (19.9%) said it would be less remote with a Directly elected Mayor and Council Manager.

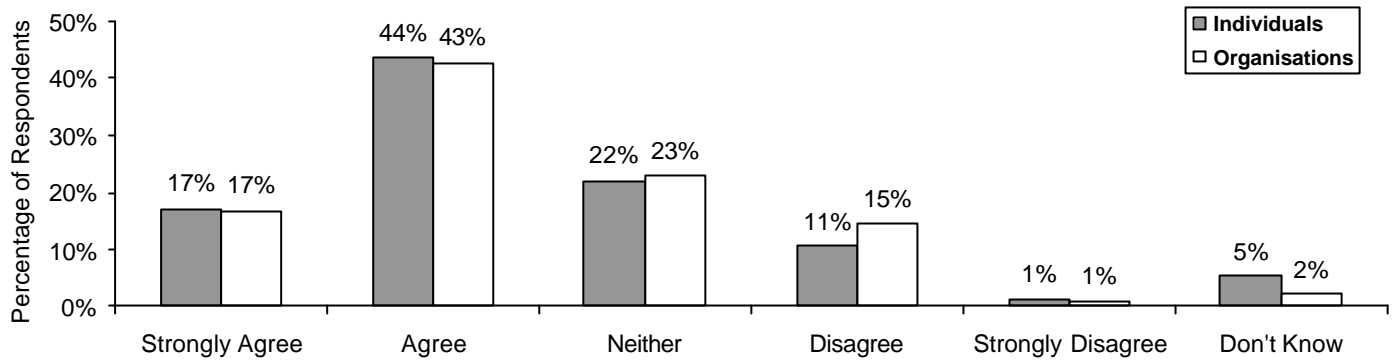
However, similar proportions stated that they thought the Council would be more remote with each of the three options. A fifth of the respondents said that a Cabinet and Leader (20.5%) or an elected Mayor and Cabinet (21.6%) would result in the Council being more remote and impersonal. A quarter (25.7%) said that an Elected Mayor and Council Manager would mean the Council is more remote.

The option the largest proportion of respondents opted for was 'Will make no difference'. Two fifths (42.9%) said that the Cabinet and Leader, three in ten (30.7%) said the elected Mayor and Cabinet, and a similar proportion (31.3%) said that the elected Mayor and Council Manger would make no difference to the remoteness of the Council.

Similarly, relatively high proportions (21.5% for Cabinet and Leader, 22.6% for Mayor and Cabinet and 23.1% for Mayor and Council Manager) of respondents stated that they did not know.

Nov '99. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The Council is too remote and impersonal

**Valid Respondents: 2315 Individuals
96 Organisations**



During the November 1999 survey three fifths of the respondents (60.6% of individuals, and 59.4% of the organisations) agreed or strongly agreed that the Council was too remote and impersonal.

Do you think that under any of the Government's three proposed models, the Council will make more of an effort to find out what people want?

		Yes, will make more effort		No, will make less effort		Will make no difference		Don't know	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Cabinet with Leader	Citizen's Panel (1007)	145	14.4	154	15.3	496	49.3	212	21.1
	Wirral Now Readers (361)	74	20.5	53	14.7	196	54.3	38	10.5
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (46)	8	17.4	10	21.7	24	52.2	4	8.7
	Businesses & organisations (90)	27	30.0	19	21.1	35	38.9	9	10.0
	Internet visitors (9)	3	33.3	1	11.1	4	44.4	1	11.1
	Overall (1513)	257	17.0	237	15.7	755	49.9	264	17.4
Elected Mayor plus Cabinet	Citizen's Panel (1016)	265	26.1	141	13.9	397	39.1	213	21.0
	Wirral Now Readers (379)	122	32.2	75	19.8	144	38.0	38	10.0
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (43)	11	25.6	13	30.2	14	32.6	5	11.6
	Businesses & organisations (86)	28	32.6	21	24.4	28	32.6	9	10.5
	Internet visitors (10)	4	40.0	3	30.0	2	20.0	1	10.0
	Overall (1534)	430	28.0	253	16.5	585	38.1	266	17.3
Elected Mayor with Council Manager	Citizen's Panel (1002)	222	22.2	155	15.5	402	40.1	223	22.3
	Wirral Now Readers (374)	103	27.5	79	21.1	153	40.9	39	10.4
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (44)	11	25.0	10	22.7	16	36.4	7	15.9
	Businesses & organisations (87)	19	21.8	24	27.6	29	33.3	15	17.2
	Internet visitors (8)	2	25.0	1	12.5	2	25.0	3	37.5
	Overall (1515)	357	23.6	269	17.8	602	39.7	287	18.9

* Size of base sample for percentages is given in brackets

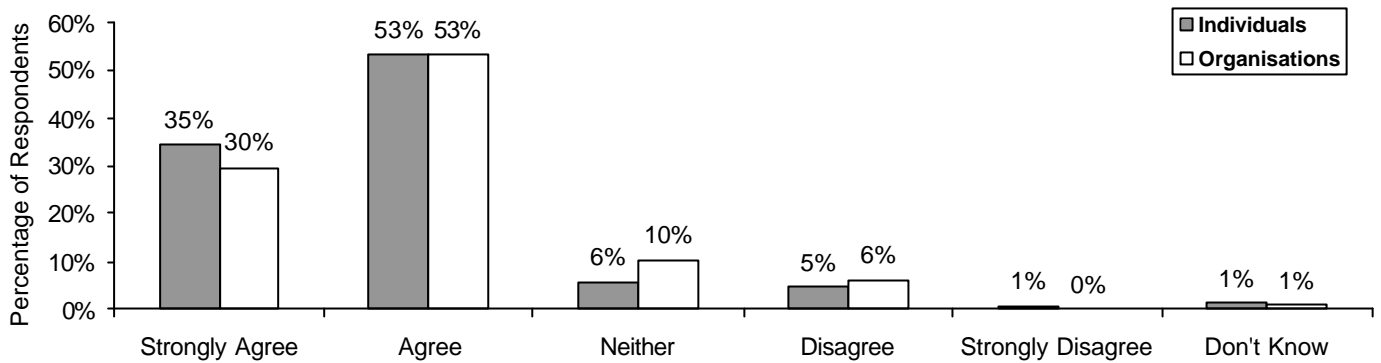
One in six respondents (17.0%) said that under a Cabinet and Leader the Council would make more of an effort to find out what people want, whereas almost one in three (28.0%) said the Council would make more of an effort with a Mayor and Cabinet and almost a quarter said it would make more effort with a Mayor and Council Manager.

Similar proportions (15.7% for Cabinet and Leader, 16.5% for Mayor and Cabinet and 17.8% for Mayor and Council Manager) said that the Council will make less of an effort to find out what people want under each of the three models.

Again, the option the highest proportion of respondents opted for with each model was 'Will make no difference'. Half (49.9%) of the respondents said the Cabinet and Leader, almost two thirds (38.1%) said the Cabinet and Mayor, and a similar proportion (39.7%) said the Mayor and Council Manager would make no difference to the effort the Council make to find out what people want.

Nov '99. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement: The Council needs to make more of an effort to find out what people want

**Valid Respondents: 2380 Individuals
98 Organisations**



During the November 1999 survey, almost nine out of ten individuals (87.8%) and more than four fifths (82.7%) of the organisations agreed or strongly agreed that the Council needed to make more of an effort to find out what people want.

Do you think that under any of the Government's three proposed models, you will have more say in what the Council does and the services it provides?

		Yes, will have more say		No, will have less say		Will make no difference		Don't know	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Cabinet with Leader	Citizen's Panel (1003)	98	9.8	172	17.1	513	51.1	220	21.9
	Wirral Now Readers (366)	51	13.9	72	19.7	205	56.0	38	10.4
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (45)	4	8.9	10	22.2	25	55.6	6	13.3
	Businesses & organisations (93)	22	23.7	21	22.6	39	41.9	11	11.8
	Internet visitors (9)	2	22.2	3	33.3	3	33.3	1	11.1
	Overall (1516)	177	11.7	278	18.3	785	51.8	276	18.2
Elected Mayor plus Cabinet	Citizen's Panel (1020)	195	19.1	166	16.3	438	42.9	221	21.7
	Wirral Now Readers (381)	96	25.2	100	26.2	141	37.0	44	11.5
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (43)	6	14.0	15	34.9	15	34.9	7	16.3
	Businesses & organisations (87)	20	23.0	28	32.2	28	32.2	11	12.6
	Internet visitors (10)	4	40.0	2	20.0	2	20.0	2	20.0
	Overall (1541)	321	20.8	311	20.2	624	40.5	285	18.5
Elected Mayor with Council Manager	Citizen's Panel (1001)	156	15.6	173	17.3	447	44.7	225	22.5
	Wirral Now Readers (376)	71	18.9	100	26.6	159	42.3	46	12.2
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (43)	9	20.9	7	16.3	19	44.2	8	18.6
	Businesses & organisations (88)	15	17.0	30	34.1	30	34.1	13	14.8
	Internet visitors (8)	1	12.5	2	25.0	2	25.0	3	37.5
	Overall (1516)	252	16.6	312	20.6	657	43.3	295	19.5

* Size of base sample for percentages is given in brackets

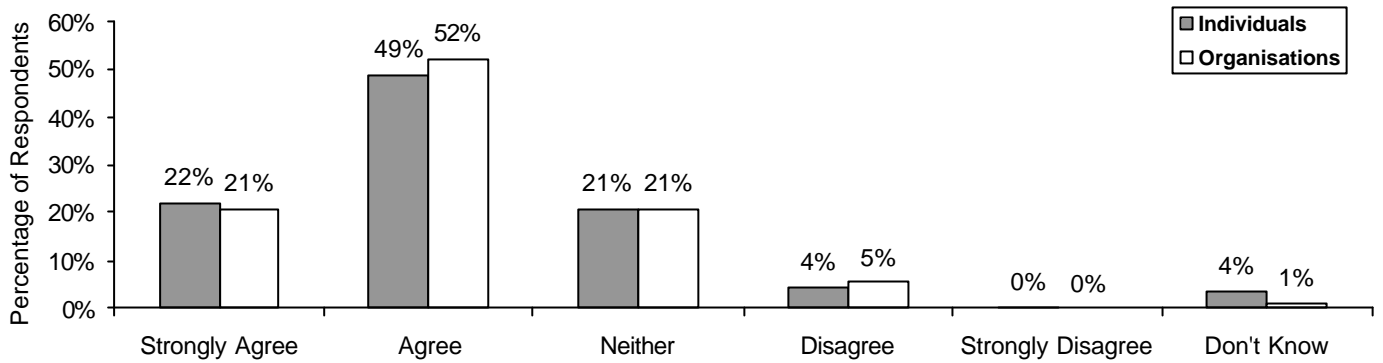
A tenth of the respondents (11.7%) said that they would have more say in what the Council does and the services it provides with a Cabinet and Leader. A fifth (20.8%) said they would have more say with an elected Mayor and Cabinet, while a sixth (16.6%) said they would have more say with an elected Mayor and Council Manager.

With each model a similar proportion said that they would have less say in what the Council does and the services it provides (18.3% with Cabinet and Leader, 20.2% with Mayor and Cabinet and 20.6% with Mayor and Council Manager).

More than half the respondents (51.8%) said that the Cabinet and Leader would not make a difference to how much say people have in what the Council does and the services it provides. Two fifths (40.5%) said the elected Mayor and Cabinet would make no difference, and a similar proportion (43.3%) said the same for a Mayor and Council Manager.

Nov '99. How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I would like to have more say in what the Council does and the services it provides

**Valid Respondents: 2294 Individuals
92 Organisations**



During the November 1999 survey, more than seven in ten respondents (70.9% of individuals and 72.9% of organisations) said they would like more say in what the Council does and the services it provides.

Do you think that under any of the Government's three proposed models, the effectiveness of how the Council operates will improve?

		Yes, will be more effective		No, will be less effective		Will make no difference		Don't know	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Cabinet with Leader	Citizen's Panel (998)	166	16.6	132	13.2	440	44.1	260	26.1
	<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (367)	88	24.0	59	16.1	168	45.8	52	14.2
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (46)	9	19.6	8	17.4	22	47.8	7	15.2
	Businesses & organisations (90)	34	37.8	17	18.9	25	27.8	14	15.6
	Internet visitors (9)	3	33.3	2	22.2	4	44.4	0	0
	Overall (1510)	300	19.9	218	14.4	659	43.6	333	22.1
Elected Mayor plus Cabinet	Citizen's Panel (1017)	221	21.7	147	14.5	367	36.1	282	27.7
	<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (377)	118	31.3	86	22.8	116	30.8	57	15.1
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (43)	10	23.3	14	32.6	13	30.2	6	14.0
	Businesses & organisations (85)	26	30.6	22	25.9	21	24.7	16	18.8
	Internet visitors (9)	5	55.5	1	11.1	2	22.2	1	11.1
	Overall (1531)	380	24.8	270	17.6	519	33.9	362	23.6
Elected Mayor with Council Manager	Citizen's Panel (997)	197	19.8	159	15.9	359	36.0	282	28.3
	<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (373)	99	26.5	99	26.5	118	31.6	57	15.3
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (42)	11	26.2	9	21.4	13	31.0	9	21.4
	Businesses & organisations (87)	22	25.3	29	33.3	20	23.0	16	18.4
	Internet visitors (7)	2	28.6	1	14.3	2	28.6	2	28.6
	Overall (1506)	331	21.9	297	19.7	512	34.0	366	24.3

* Size of base sample for percentages is given in brackets

Approximately a fifth of the respondents said that effectiveness of the Council would improve with either a Cabinet and Leader (19.9%) or a Mayor with Council Manager (21.9%). Whereas almost a quarter (24.8%) said the effectiveness would improve with an Elected Mayor and Cabinet.

Almost a fifth (19.7%) of the respondents said that the Council would become less effective with a Mayor and Council Manager, and a similar proportion said it would become less effective with a Mayor and Cabinet (17.6%). One in seven respondents (14.4%) said that the Council would become less effective with a Cabinet and Leader.

More than two fifths (43.6%) said that there would be no difference in the effectiveness of the Council with a Cabinet and Leader, whereas a third said that there would be no difference with either a Mayor and Cabinet (33.9%) or a Mayor and Council Manager (34.0%). With each model, slightly less than a quarter of the respondents said that they did not know.

Do you think that under any of the Government's three proposed models, will help give people opportunities to get involved in how the Council is run?

		Yes, people will get more involved		No, people will get less involved		Will make no difference		Don't know	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Cabinet with Leader	Citizen's Panel (1004)	93	9.3	161	16.0	481	47.9	269	26.8
	<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (369)	48	13.0	86	23.3	193	52.3	42	11.4
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (43)	3	7.0	10	23.3	24	55.8	6	14.0
	Businesses & organisations (91)	21	23.1	21	23.1	36	39.6	13	14.3
	Internet visitors (9)	2	22.2	3	33.3	3	33.3	1	11.1
	Overall (1516)	167	11.0	281	18.5	737	48.6	331	21.8
Elected Mayor plus Cabinet	Citizen's Panel (1017)	175	17.2	145	14.3	430	42.3	267	26.3
	<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (376)	80	21.3	91	24.2	158	42.0	47	12.5
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (43)	5	11.6	15	34.9	16	37.2	7	16.3
	Businesses & organisations (86)	16	18.6	24	27.9	29	33.7	17	19.8
	Internet visitors (9)	4	44.4	1	11.1	3	33.3	1	11.1
	Overall (1531)	280	18.3	276	18.0	636	41.5	339	22.1
Elected Mayor with Council Manager	Citizen's Panel (998)	144	14.4	158	15.8	421	42.2	275	27.6
	<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (373)	60	16.1	97	26.0	166	44.5	50	13.4
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (43)	10	23.3	9	20.9	15	34.9	9	20.9
	Businesses & organisations (88)	16	18.2	25	28.4	30	34.1	17	19.3
	Internet visitors (7)	1	14.3	1	14.3	3	42.9	2	28.6
	Overall (1509)	231	15.3	290	19.2	635	42.1	353	23.4

* Size of base sample for percentages is given in brackets

Almost a fifth of the respondents (18.3%) said that a Mayor and Cabinet would help give more people opportunities to get involved in how the Council is run. More than one in seven respondents (15.3%) said more people would be given opportunities to get involved if a Mayor and Council Manager was in place, whereas a tenth (11.0) said people would be given more opportunities under a Cabinet and Leader.

With each model, almost a fifth of the respondents (19.2% for Mayor and Council Manager, 18.5% for Cabinet and Leader and 18.0% for Mayor and Cabinet) said that people would be given less opportunities to get involved in how the Council is run.

Two fifths of the respondents said that under a Mayor and Cabinet (41.5%) and an Mayor and Council Manager (42.1%) there would no difference to the opportunities people are given to get involved in how the Council is run. Almost half (48.6%) said that there would be no difference with a Cabinet and Leader.

Overall, do you think that any of the Government's three proposed models will be better, worse, or not any different from the present Committee structure?

		Better		Worse		Will make no difference		Don't know	
		Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Cabinet with Leader	Citizen's Panel (995)	153	15.4	142	14.3	467	46.9	233	23.4
	<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (367)	85	23.2	76	20.7	171	46.6	35	9.5
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (43)	6	14.0	9	20.9	21	48.8	7	16.3
	Businesses & organisations (91)	33	36.3	20	22.0	31	34.1	7	7.7
	Internet visitors (9)	1	11.1	3	33.3	4	44.4	1	11.1
Overall (1505)		278	18.5	250	16.6	694	46.1	283	18.8
Elected Mayor plus Cabinet	Citizen's Panel (1013)	234	23.1	175	17.3	364	35.9	240	23.7
	<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (379)	116	30.6	116	30.6	106	28.0	41	10.8
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (42)	11	26.2	12	28.6	13	31.0	6	14.3
	Businesses & organisations (83)	25	30.1	26	31.3	20	24.1	12	14.5
	Internet visitors (9)	5	55.5	1	11.1	2	22.2	1	11.1
Overall (1526)		391	25.6	330	21.6	505	33.1	300	19.7
Elected Mayor with Council Manager	Citizen's Panel (993)	196	19.7	199	20.0	340	34.2	258	26.0
	<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (373)	98	26.3	126	33.8	112	30.0	37	9.9
	Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (42)	12	28.6	10	23.8	12	28.6	8	19.0
	Businesses & organisations (85)	21	24.7	32	37.6	19	22.4	13	15.3
	Internet visitors (7)	2	28.6	1	14.3	2	28.6	2	28.6
Overall (1500)		329	21.9	368	24.5	485	32.3	318	21.2

* Size of base sample for percentages is given in brackets

A quarter of the respondents (25.6%) said that a Mayor and Cabinet, and approximately a fifth said that a Mayor and Council Manager (21.9%) or a Cabinet and Leader (18.5%), would be better than the current Committee structures.

A quarter of the respondents (24.5%) said that the Mayor and Council Manager, and more than a fifth (21.9%) said the Mayor and Cabinet would be worse than the Committee structures. One in six respondents (16.6%) said that the Cabinet and Leader would be worse than the Committee structure.

Almost half (46.1%) of the respondents said that a Cabinet and Leader, and a third said the Mayor and Cabinet (33.1%) or Mayor and Council Manager (32.2%) structures would not make any difference in comparison to the present Committee structures.

With each model approximately a fifth of the respondents said that they did not know.

Which system do you think would be best for Wirral?

	Don't know enough about it		Elected Mayor plus Cabinet		Cabinet with Leader		Elected Mayor with Council Manager		No Preference	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Citizen's Panel (994)	332	33.4	201	20.2	193	19.4	151	15.2	117	11.8
<i>Wirral Now</i> Readers (410)	88	21.5	88	21.5	136	33.2	24	5.9	74	18.0
Libraries, One-stop-shops etc. (45)	10	22.2	9	20.0	11	24.4	5	11.1	10	22.2
Businesses & organisations (89)	10	11.2	20	22.5	39	43.8	14	15.7	6	6.7
Internet visitors (10)	0	0	4	40.0	3	30.0	1	10.0	2	20.0
Overall (1548)	440	28.4	322	20.8	382	24.6	195	12.6	209	13.5

* Size of base sample for percentages is given in brackets

Overall, a quarter of the respondents (24.6%) said a Cabinet and Leader would be best for Wirral, a fifth (20.8%) said a Mayor and Cabinet would be best and an eighth (12.6%) said a Mayor and Council Manager would be best. The largest proportion overall was 'Don't know enough about it' (28.4%) while just over an eighth (13.5%) had no preference.

A third of the Citizens Panel respondents (33.4%) said that they did not know enough about it; approximately a fifth opted for either the Mayor and Cabinet (20.2%) or the Cabinet and Leader (20.2%) and a slightly smaller proportion had a preference for the Mayor and Council Manager (15.2%). A tenth (11.8%) of the Citizens' Panel had no preference.

The preferred option of the *Wirral Now* readers was the Cabinet and Leader (33.2%), with a fifth (21.5%) opting for a Mayor and Cabinet and a much smaller proportions (5.9%) wanting a Mayor and Council Manager. A fifth (21.5%) of the *Wirral Now* respondents did not know enough about it and a similar proportion (18.0%) had no preference.

A quarter (24.4%) of the respondents completing questionnaires from Libraries, One-stop-shops and Information Centres preferred the Cabinet and Leader option, a fifth (20.0%) opted for the Mayor and Cabinet, while a tenth (11.1%) would like to see a Mayor and Council Manager.

The preferred option for respondents from the businesses and organisations, was the Cabinet and Leader model with more than two fifths (43.8%) of the respondents opting for it. Almost a quarter (22.5%) preferred the Mayor and Cabinet model, while almost one in six (15.7%) wanted a Mayor and Council Manager. A fifth (11.2%) did not know enough about it, while a small proportion (6.7%) had no preference.

Of the small number of internet respondents, the preferred options were the Mayor and Cabinet (40.0%) and Cabinet and Leader (30.0%) models.

Qualitative Research

Focus Groups

Four focus groups were convened.

Two focus groups involved Citizens' Panel members (recruited by MIS). The members were selected geographically. Focus group A comprised Citizens' Panel members residing in the Wirral West or Wirral South Parliamentary constituencies, while focus group B comprised panel members who live in the Wallasey or Birkenhead constituencies. Focus group A took place at Westbourne Hall, West Kirby on 31.01.01. Focus group B was held at Wirral Multicultural centre, Birkenhead on 1.02.01.

In addition to this a discussion group with the Living Options disability group, and staff of the Multicultural Centre also took place.

Overview of feedback from focus groups

Members of focus group A were all in support for a directly elected Mayor. Most supported a Mayor with Cabinet although some preferred a Council Manager. There was universal desire to see local government move away from party politics.

Members of focus group B were divided in their choice of preferred option. There was support for a directly elected Mayor; again more of these members preferred the Mayor and Cabinet Model rather than the Mayor and Council Manager model. Supporters of the Mayoral system believed that a Mayor could potentially bring change to the area and generate more local interest in the Council. However, there was also strong support expressed for a Leader and Cabinet and particular concerns about the ultimate power of an elected Mayor.

The disability and Multicultural groups were more concerned with the more general discussion about communication with the Council and the services they received from the Council. No strong preferences were expressed in either group.

Focus group members were asked if they had one message they would hope would be taken into account when decisions were being made about local democracy:

“Get away from party politics and give personal responsibility....at the end you want somebody to carry the can”

“Go for Mayor. Go for really effective decision making”.

“Cabinet and leader is more democratic”

Detailed feedback from focus groups

Communication with the Council:

There was a general degree of concern with communication with the Council. Members of group A did not feel totally uniformed “but I would have to go chasing the information rather than it coming to me”.

The Council’s main vehicle for communication with the public is *Wirral Now*. This is a supplement added to a local free paper (the *Wirral Globe*) and distributed to every household in Wirral. The use of *Wirral Now* was almost universally deemed unsatisfactory. Some group members did not receive the *Globe*, whereas most others said that they would not read *Wirral Now* even when it was delivered.

A small number of group members said that they would read it at the local libraries, but they did not know it was available. The Multicultural Centre was not sent copies of *Wirral Now*; if it was then they would be able to translate relevant sections into appropriate languages. The Multicultural group felt that more information about direct services rather than general information was of more use to their members. Some members of the disability focus group believed the council to only “tell one side of the story” through their literature.

The groups were asked for suggestions as to how the Council can improve its communication. One suggestion was “instead of an insert in the *Wirral Globe* couldn’t it be part of the *Wallasey News*?”. Nearly all members of group B regularly got the *Wallasey News*. There was also general approval of a Council Magazine with a “What’s on in Wirral” theme. “Without a doubt that is better... it creates an interest” which group B considered would make people want to keep hold of the magazine. One member received a similar magazine from Ellesmere Port, which she felt to be better and more interesting, “it makes you read through”.

In group A, however there was less support for a newspaper based method of communication:

“I don’t read papers....if I was directly mailed I would read it.....but if you asked me to contribute my thoughts on things, I would give them”.

“I do read the papers but I find it hard to tell the news from the adverts, there are so many adverts that the news gets lost”

“...especially if you use the *Globe* or the free papers, I understand the reasons for using them, but they’re particularly guilty of that crime”

“I tend to only read things that are of particular interest to me”

There was widespread support from groups A and B for a range of methods in which the Council should communicate. Groups were asked if they had visited the Council’s web-site. Some members had but most had not. Members of group B acknowledged the internet is “not universally available” while another asked “how many people would be interested in it?” Members of the disability focus group felt the web-site was a good method of communication, as day-centres they used had computing facilities.

Other members of the groups expressed concerns at not knowing where the most appropriate place to obtain information was:

“There are so many departments, there’s so many phone numbers, there’s so many different titles from where you’d imagine they might be that it’s difficult to find information. So you may be better with a brief synopsis where every directive is and where you go to get more information.”

Others felt that the internet was a good way of combating this:

“If I wanted to know something specific I’d probably turn to the website. It’s more convenient and quicker way of getting it”.

Very few group members had seen the last Best Value Performance Plan. One who had seen it said “they’re not often very accessible in the way they’re presented....it doesn’t exactly turn you on”. “Presentation is so important...if it looks intimidating or difficult to get into, it will very quickly find the bin”.

Local Democracy Information and Consultation:

Few people had heard of the proposed changes to Local Democracy before being given the information they received through membership of the Citizens’ Panel.

“Following the London decision I heard they were thinking of extending it to other areas, but then it all went quiet. I thought it was only going to be in the big cities”.

No members of the disability group had heard of the changes. Some members of groups A and B said that they may not have heard about the proposed changes at all if they were not Citizens’ Panel members.

The groups were asked about the information they had received and whether they felt it was informative enough for them to make a decision. Group members acknowledged that the subject matter was quite different from other Council consultation.

“Not many people know much about this sort of thing...all they know is they’ve got to pay their Council tax.....and they know there’s someone up there making decisions, but they don’t pay much attention.....but if the bins are not emptied, they jump up and down”

“It’s difficult to have an opinion on this [local democracy] particular issue, when you have no experience with it....we’ve heard of other systems....but we don’t have direct experience. So it’s an area where it’s difficult to have any strong views

Some members said they did not “immediately” feel informed enough about changes to local democracy after reading information. It “took a few readings [of local democracy information]” to understand. Others said that local democracy information had provided a greater understanding of local government “but I wouldn’t want to take an intelligence test on it”.

The discussion in group B turned to a more general discussion about awareness of Local government. Amongst the general public they felt most people are relatively unaware of decision making in the Council:

“People are aware of the Council [in that], are the bins emptied regularly?...is the library open when they want it to be? but not the internal workings of local government”

This was not the case however, with most of the people present. They felt it was important to be aware of these issues. “I think it’s very important now and increasingly important to be aware of how the decision making process is being adhered to or being created, and what controls and checks are there”.

Members present also disagreed with the statement ‘I don’t care how Council makes decisions as long as it does its job’. “It’s a very dangerous precedent”.....
“we wouldn’t be here tonight if we agreed with that”.

However it was acknowledged that the members of the focus group might be more interested in local government than the majority of people in the borough. "70% of people don't vote [in local elections] and this is the real challenge...[They] feel 'what's the point in voting?'"

The Three Models:

In each focus group the three models, along with the present system, were explained in some detail. Questions relating to some of the technical details of each model were then raised and answered.

In group B a discussion arose from the belief that too much power may rest with one person if the Mayor and Cabinet model is chosen:

erson with total power?...it's dynamite".

There was some degree of support with this comment, and others expressed concern about the degree of power the Mayor would possess. Concerns were also expressed that some real damage could be done to the area during a four year Mayoral term, should the "wrong" candidate be selected. Some members felt the problem of too much power would be exasperated by a powerful Cabinet:

1. "...but this one leader can have this shell [the Cabinet] around him....and we've got to have him for four years".

2. "...but you voted him in for the four years to do the job"

1. "...but I didn't know who he would bring into his cabinet did I?"

2. "I think things will get better for the whole of the Wirral"

1. "I tend to think it's too much power for one person"

2. "...but he can't have that much power because he's still governed by the views of the scrutiny committee. He can't just go away...and do what he likes. The scrutiny committee is there to keep a check".

However, there was also support for a powerful Mayor who may be able to bring about positive change:

"So much depends on what ...we want the Council to do. Do we want to elect a Council where there are so many checks and balances it's very difficult to make decisions we don't like? Or do we want to elect a Council to do, or actually make things change? The problem with that is...which is the Mayoral thing...is that we can elect someone with real power, will speed decision making, but it may speed it in a direction we don't like and we've got to wait four years to put it right".

"You're only going to go to one of three people [local Councillors – with a non-Mayoral system] in your ward....and they're only one of sixty-six people. So even if you get what you want, you're a very small voice.....But when the Mayor says "I'm going to drive this through, this is what I'm going to do, I'm going to pick a cabinet and I'm going to make this happen"...it really is more important, because he can force things through."

Members of the groups who supported a directly elected Mayor argued that it was possible to have some checks on the power of the Mayor, for example "the main Council will still be responsible for setting the budget". Other members supporting a Mayoral system argued that concerns about the

potential for a future Mayor to “damage “ the area are misguided, because the Mayor would be carrying out the wishes of the public who voted him or her in:

“But people have to vote for him”.

“If he’s clever enough to get the 70% of people who don’t normally vote to vote for him, then it’s a wonderful manifesto”.

A conversation arose based on the dangers associated with a potentially damaging Mayor, managing to mobilise the support of the borough’s traditional non-voters and becoming elected.

1.) “If....a no-hoper [candidate] manages to get that 70% vote then we’ve got him for four years. He can make promises he blatantly knows he can’t keep, but that 70% believe him”.

2.) “....and they all vote for [name of local celebrity] or something?”

3.) “....are we really that naive?”

One person argued that the nature of electing a Mayor is itself a check on the abuse of power:

“These Mayors are powerful people. Maybe they’re not just thinking about the political party that supports them....they’re very much thinking towards the next election. Power is important.....and they want to stay in power. They’ve been elected on their manifesto, and it’s much more easy for the electorate to say ‘here is someone who stands for something’. It’s very clear.....I can judge that person.....at least when this guy comes up again....for re-election you look down all the promises that were made.....That is the major check on the abuse of power for a mayor. I agree it carries a risk.”

There was general agreement that the role of Mayor was very powerful and that, should the ‘wrong’ person be in power there is the risk of potential damage. However some argued that this risk was temporary:

“He’s got four years to come up with the goods....and if he doesn’t come up with the goods he won’t be voted in again.”

“But he could do a lot of damage [in four years]”.

Group members were aware of voter apathy at local elections, and some felt that a Mayoral system might increase interest in local politics:

“With the three main political parties, you end up with three baskets of goodies, their manifestos. You have this package, this package or that package and you can’t say ‘well I’d like this bit of that one and this bit of another one’. I think if you get more candidates, assuming you do get more candidates with Mayoral elections you might get a bigger variety....and you might find somebody who is more suited to your own particular views.”

“With a directly elected Mayor you’re going to have a big say...because you’re going to pick somebody on their policy”.

“More information will get to people with B, they’re [the Mayor] directly elected so they’ll [the public] know better and they’ll be making the decision so they’ll feel more involved”.

Members of the groups also argued that a Mayoral system makes local politics more personalised, and easier to apportion blame (or credit):

“I would go for B [Mayor and cabinet]...I like the idea of saying “I’ll vote for him and he carries the buck”.”

“What worries me a little about that one [Mayor and Council Manager]...is who do you hold responsible, the Mayor or the Manager? Where as with B [elected Mayor and cabinet] you know jolly well who it is.”

This related to a conversation in group B, regarding which of the models was most democratic:

“The model which is most democratic is the one that gets 70% of the electorate out, whichever model it is. At the moment we don’t seem to have any model which makes the electorate think [politics in general] below government is worth bothering with.”

“more people will vote [with a directly elected Mayor]. You say ‘what do you want?’ and ‘this chap’s going to give it to you’”.

In relation to democracy, the conversation in group B again returned to concerns expressed about the overall power the Mayor would possess:

“...but he can’t please everybody can he [the Mayor], he can only please some of the people.....It’s too much [power] for one person. If it’s split up and other people have similar power, you’re more likely to get a democratic view”.

Members of group A expressed a strong desire to see local politics move away from party political lines. This featured in the reasons they suggested for preferring particular models:

“I’m more inclined towards the directly elected Mayor.....because I don’t like to see local politics being dominated by the national parties”.

“I think B [Mayor and Cabinet] and C [Mayor and Council Manager] would [move away from party politics]. A [Cabinet and Leader] would stick with the party political detail.”

Most members of group A agreed with these points.

Round Up:

All members of groups A and B felt more informed about local democracy and the proposed changes as a result of attending the focus group. Most of the group agreed things had become “much, much clearer” during the course of the focus group. Some members of group A felt it may be a good idea to hold some form of public forum or meeting on the subject of local democracy.

Members of the group were asked which models they preferred or if they had any concerns. The Cabinet and Leader model was felt to be closest to the current Committee structures. Some group members saw this as a disadvantage of the model:

“I think A [Cabinet and Leader] is the easy option to take....because it’s the one we’re most used to”

Members of group A stressed that the Cabinet and Leader model was most similar to the status quo – something they were all keen to move away from. Other problems expressed with the cabinet and leader model was that the public “have no direct influence over this important person who carries the flag”. The cabinet and leader model also “feels safe because nobody’s got much power to really change things”.

“Yes, I think you could say A [cabinet and leader] is the safest, in that it’s the closest to what we’ve got at the moment..... but if we’re looking to do something to really change local democracy.....as an elector, I will be much more likely to think it really matters to me to go out and vote, ok albeit every four years, if he or she [the Mayor] has put together something on which they stand. And I’m going to watch how that person delivers....and I know that I’m genuinely voting for a change of somebody who’s got the power to influence things”.

Supporters of the Cabinet and Leader model regarded the lack of power as the Cabinet and Leader model’s main advantage:

“I am more concerned about democracy. I would go for A [cabinet and leader].” Group member qualified this mentioning the potential change of leader every 12 months by changing political makeup of Councillors.

“A [Cabinet and Leader] seems to be the safest one.” The member went on to explain how she also thought the fact that the Leader could potentially change every 12 months depending on the political make up of the Council, was “a good thing because democratically it’s divided equally depending on what representation you have in the Council. I think A [Cabinet and leader] is the most democratic”.

“I believe in counterbalances....and I think A [cabinet and leader] has the better counter-balances.”

Another member preferring the cabinet and leader model said “I don’t like the idea of someone having all that power....four years is a long time”.

There was strong support for the directly Elected Mayor and Cabinet Model amongst those less concerned about the Mayor’s power.

“I like the idea [of a directly elected Mayor with cabinet] to be honest, ...the people are going to vote for the chap with the best manifesto...he’s going to promise this and this.”

Those in support of a Mayor felt it would bring the potential of real positive change for the area. Most agreed that the election of a Mayor may carry a risk should a bad candidate be appointed, but this risk was small because the electorate still need to be convinced before they elect him. Members of group A all felt an elected Mayor would move local government away from party politics and more in touch with the needs of local people, including minority groups.

“One would hope that a directly elected Mayor would know he’s got to get votes from these minority groups and he knows he’s got to make it clear that he’ll take their views into account”. These views did not alleviate the concerns of members who felt the power of the Mayor may be too great:

“I’m questioning what I thought when I arrived. I was dead set for B [elected Mayor and Cabinet], now I’ve got to think about it.” (Member was questioned over what had produced this) – “the ultimate power”.

"I said A [cabinet and leader] to begin with, but now I'm going for B [elected Mayor with Cabinet]. A is the safe option" (member did want the Council to pick the "safe" option). However he also had concerns about an elected Mayor with cabinet: "but I don't like the idea of four years [for an elected Mayor] – if it was shorter than four years I'd definitely go for B [elected Mayor and cabinet]."

"it may not effect you [focus group members] much, but if you're going through the education system for those four years it will have a large influence".

The elected Mayor and Council Manger model also had some support, but also some critics:

"We've had very little discussion about C [elected Mayor and Council Manager] and I'm in favour of that. Because you've got an elected Mayor which I can see the benefits of, but you've also got a Council Manager to counter-balance that". – there was some agreement with this point.

"It [option C] does [bring an element of counterbalance] but I don't think that's necessarily a good thing".

"I thought it [option C] might make it ineffectual".

"I don't like the last one [elected Mayor with Council Manager]...it's far too complicated, people won't understand it.

"I think your system of directly elected Mayor, with the Mayor picking the Chief Executive would not be that much different from B where you elected the Mayor and he picks the Cabinet".

"...but in any of these cases it's a group decision as to who becomes the Chief Executive"

"I think I chose C [Mayor and Council Manager – on the panel questionnaire] but I was under the misunderstanding that the Mayor picked his own Manager".

Stage 2 Results

Second Stage Consultation Results:

Who do you think should choose the members of the cabinet?

	The Council Leader		The whole Council		No preference	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Individuals**(92)	18	19.6	74	80.4	0	0
Organisations**(87)	12	13.8	75	86.2	0	0
Overall	30	16.8	149	83.2	0	0

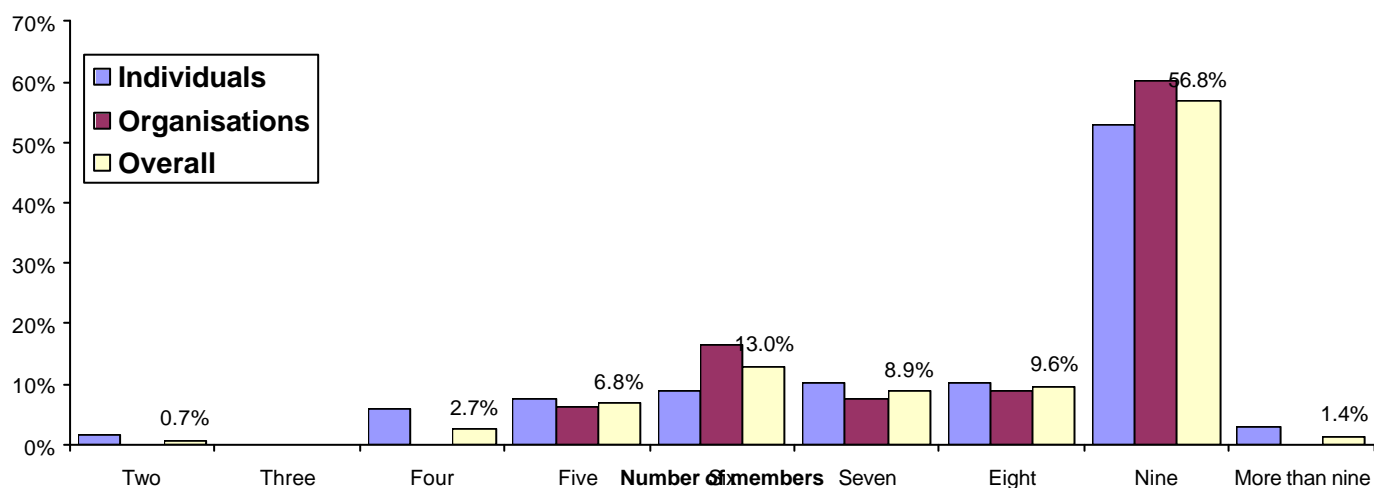
*Size of base sample for percentages is given in brackets

** Individuals relates to questionnaires from Wirral Now, libraries, one stop shops and information centres. Organisations relates to schools, businesses and voluntary organisations etc.

More than four in five respondents (83.2%) said that the members of the cabinet should be chosen by the whole Council.

There can be between two and nine members of the Cabinet (plus the Leader). Do you have any views on how many Cabinet Members Wirral should have? If so, please state how many you think would be best. Only the overall results are displayed in this chart.

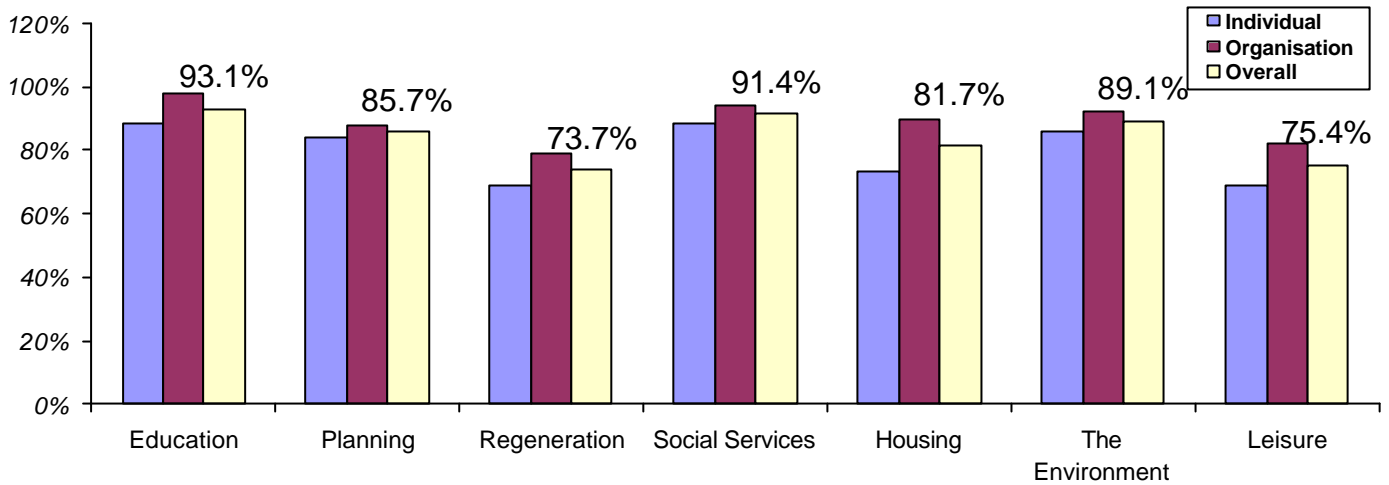
Valid Respondents: Individuals: 68
Organisations: 78



Almost three fifths (56.8%) of the overall respondents said that they would prefer nine members of the Cabinet.

Members of the Cabinet will each have a 'portfolio' or an area of responsibility. Which of the following do you think are important areas to be covered in a Cabinet Member's portfolio?* *Only the overall respondents percentages are contained within the chart.*

*Valid Respondents: Individuals: 86
Organisations: 89*



The areas most respondents wish to see covered by a Cabinet portfolio were education (93.1% of overall respondents wanted this covered), social services (91.4%) and the environment (89.1%).

Other suggested portfolios:

Valid responses: 73

	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Highways and transport	22	30.1
Policing and fire	13	17.8
Finance	7	9.6
Employment/economic activity	7	9.6
Equal opportunities	4	5.5
Personnel/admin	3	4.1
Tourism/culture	2	2.7
Care for the elderly	1	1.4
Pensions	1	1.4
Parks/open spaces	1	1.4
Voluntary work	1	1.4
Disabled persons issues	1	1.4
Women/children	1	1.4

Other areas that respondents wanted to see covered by a Cabinet portfolio included highways and transport (30.1%) and policing and fire (17.8%).

Either the Leader or the whole Council can decide which members of the Cabinet are responsible for specific portfolios or responsibilities. Who do you think should make these decisions?

	The Council Leader		The whole Council		No preference	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Individuals* (94)	25	26.6	68	72.3	1	1.1
Organisations (90)	37	41.1	51	56.7	2	2.2
Overall (184)	62	33.7	119	64.7	3	1.6

**Size of base sample for percentages is given in brackets*

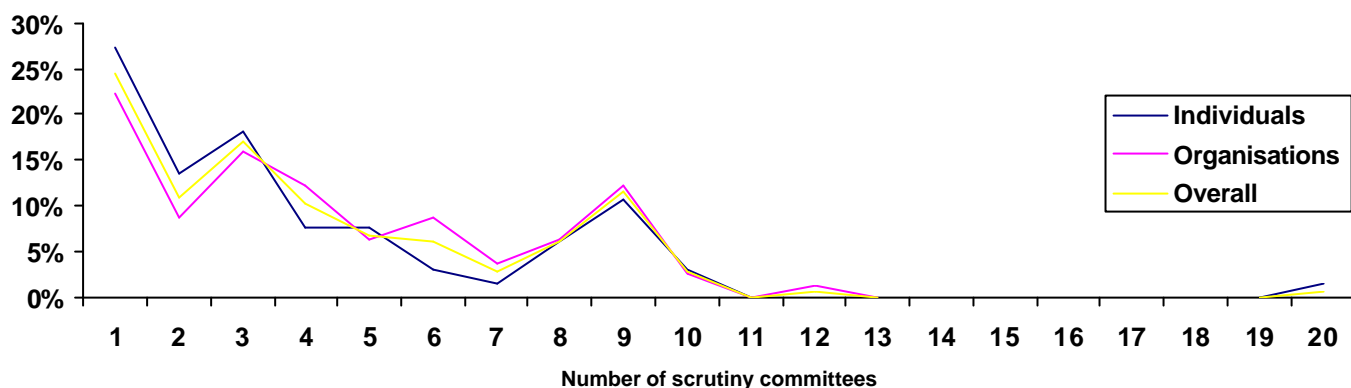
Almost two thirds of the overall respondents (64.7%) wanted the whole Council to decide which members of the Cabinet are responsible for specific portfolios.

The Council will have to have at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee. These Committees will:

- a) keep a check on the Executive by reviewing their decisions and by calling in for scrutiny decisions they are not happy with (although they cannot change them)
- b) assist in the review and development of policy.

Do you have any views on how many Overview and Scrutiny Committees Wirral should have? If so, please state how many you think would be best. *Due to the large range (1 to 20) of preferred cabinet members within the individual respondents, this data has been displayed on a line graph rather than a column graph.*

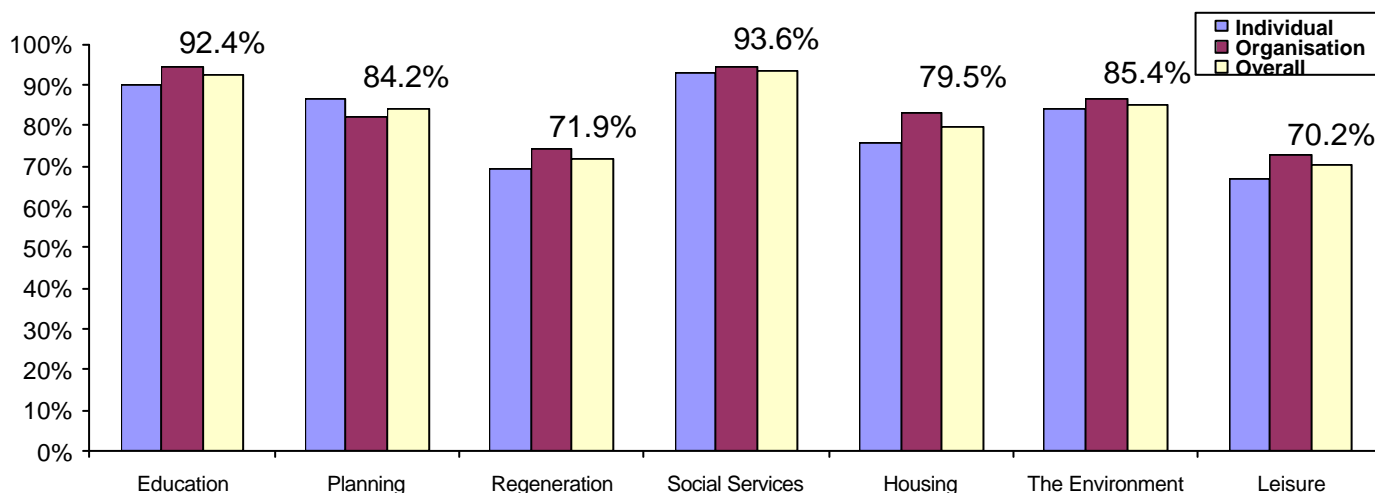
Valid Respondents: Individuals: 66
Organisations: 81



Most respondents would prefer to have a small number of scrutiny committees. More than three fifths (62.6%) of the overall respondents would prefer to have between one and four scrutiny committees, a quarter (24.5%) of the overall respondents wanted only one committee.

Which of the following do you think are important areas to be covered by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee? *Only the overall respondents percentages are contained within the chart.*

Valid Respondents: Individuals: 82
Organisations: 89



The areas most respondents wanted to see be covered by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee were social services (93.6%), education (92.4%) and the environment (85.4%).

Other suggested areas to be covered by a scrutiny committee:

Valid responses: 66

	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Transport	18	27.3
Finance	12	18.2
Policing and fire	10	15.2
Health	7	10.6
Highways/direct labour	5	7.6
Employment/economic development	4	6.1
Equal opportunities	3	4.5
Personnel/pensions	2	3.0
Tourism	1	1.5
Care for the elderly	1	1.5
Ethical conduct of Officers and Councillors	1	1.5
Disabled persons issues	1	1.5
Women/children	1	1.5

The Government encourages authorities to have area committees or forums for consultation, decision making or both. Which of the following roles do you think Wirral's area forums should perform?

	To consult local people and provide the whole Council with information about the needs of local communities		To make decisions which relate to local communities.		I don't think Wirral should have any area structures.	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Individuals*(92)	78	84.8	29	31.5	8	8.7
Organisations(89)	79	88.8	31	34.8	6	6.7
Overall(181)	157	86.7	60	33.1	14	7.7

**Size of base sample for percentages is given in brackets*

Almost nine out of ten respondents (86.7%) wanted area committees to consult local people and provide the whole Council with information about the needs of local communities. A third of the respondents (33.1%) wanted area committees to make decisions which relate to local communities.

If you think the local area structures should make local decisions, please tell us what kind of decisions they should make.

Valid Responses: 70

	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Environmental	19	27.1
Planning	15	21.4
Direct services	7	10.0
Financial allocation	5	7.1
Education	4	5.7
Regeneration/economic development	4	5.7
Security/policing	4	5.7
Housing	4	5.7
Value for money	3	4.3
Leisure services	2	2.9
Social services	2	2.9
Health	1	1.4

Most respondents wanted area committees to make decisions about environmental (27.1%) or planning (21.4%) issues.

Stage 2 – Open ended questions:

Do you have any views on how the Planning, Licensing, Health and Safety, Pensions, and Statutory Standards Committee should operate?

Valid responses: 106

	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
With no self interest/political part affiliation	27	25.5
Hold regular public meetings	15	14.2
Consult more widely on issues	15	14.2
Publish minutes of meetings and more information	13	12.3
Include specialists in particular areas	9	8.5
Quicker/less bureaucracy	7	6.6
Initiate a review that is open to the public	6	5.7
Have an impartial member on each committee	4	3.8
Without fear	3	2.8
Deal only with issues with a major financial/physical/service impact	2	1.9
Functions outsourced but managed by Council	1	0.9
All Councillors should serve in rotation	1	0.9
Each committee should have representatives from the relevant scrutiny committee	1	0.9
The chair should be selected from the cabinet and members from the Council, not the scrutiny committee	1	0.9
All matters ratified by full Council	1	0.9

Are there any other plans or strategies you think the Council should have responsibility for? If so which?

Valid responses: 76

	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
The environment	18	23.7
Police/fire	8	10.5
The elderly	7	9.2
Equal opportunities	6	7.9
Housing	6	7.9
Finance	6	7.9
Economic and business development	6	7.9
Leisure services	5	6.6
Open review of local government/ ethical conduct	4	5.3
LA21	2	2.6
Appoint members to outside bodies	2	2.6
Appoint members to area structures after taking account of local wishes	2	2.6
Tourism/culture	2	2.6
Disabled people	1	1.3
Voluntary organisations	1	1.3

If you have any suggestions about how the Council could become more involved with the community and more open and accessible, please tell us about them.

Valid responses: 139

	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Hold public meetings	31	22.3
Have a base in the community/Council surgeries	28	20.1
Don't make decisions without telling people	16	11.5
Produce a regular newsletter	15	10.8
Tell people where the money is spent	8	5.8
Provide minutes of meetings in public places	8	5.8
Area Committees	7	5.0
Live in the locality for a while	3	2.2
Abolish affiliation to national political parties	3	2.2
Publicise Meetings	3	2.2
More involvement with the voluntary sector	3	2.2
Provide information about education	2	1.4
Make it clear how important Council services are	2	1.4
Have 'phone in' numbers	2	1.4
Yearly review of cabinet responsibilities by Council	2	1.4
Councillors should inspect/evaluate quality of public works	2	1.4
A suggestions box system	1	0.7
Return Birkenhead and Wallasey to County Borough status	1	0.7
Appoint a public relations officer	1	0.7
Provide a register of Committee members	1	0.7

How do you think the Council can best find the views of local people?

Valid responses: 214

	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Door to door interviews	38	17.8
Questionnaires	31	14.5
Public meetings	30	14.0
Area committees	23	10.7
Listen when people have problems	20	9.3
Councillor surgeries	19	8.9
Local radio/free newspapers	14	6.5
Encourage people to become involved	14	6.5
An e-mail Council question time	6	2.8
Referenda	5	2.3
User friendly notices in public places	4	1.9
Contact with voluntary and other groups	3	1.4
Suggestions boxes in public places	2	0.9
Paid staff to cover Councillor's surgeries	2	0.9
Wide advertising of relevant people/departments	2	0.9
Free from national politics	1	0.5

If you have any views about the role of your local Councillor in the new system, please tell us about them.

Valid responses: 143

	Number of responses	Percentage of responses
Should be actively engaged with local community	60	42.0
More accessible/open	16	11.2
Councillors' role should not be diminished	15	10.5
Report community's concerns and take action	15	10.5
Free from party politics	13	9.1
More experience and skills needed	5	3.5
New system seems to place more power in fewer hands	4	2.8
Regular news/information	4	2.8
Councillors should work in the area they are from	3	2.1
Set performance targets for Councillors	3	2.1
Reduce number of wards	2	1.4
Changes should not result in larger workloads for Councillors	1	0.7
Will new system cost too much?	1	0.7
Councillors should have the power to report on the Cabinet	1	0.7

Appendix 1: Stage 1 questionnaire and information

Appendix 2: Stage 2 questionnaire and information

Appendix 3: Open-ended responses from stage 1 consultation

All Wirral Panel

What would you like to see changed about the political structures?

Valid responses 279

	Number	Percentage
Be more open and accountable to public	88	31.5
Less political influence, just work together	49	17.6
More consultation with public	49	17.6
More even representation	21	7.5
Simplify the system/streamline	17	6.1
Proportional representation	12	4.3
More even funding across borough	11	3.9
Faster decision making	7	2.5
Paid elected council leaders needed	7	2.5
Less involvement from central government	6	2.2
Movement back to more devolved democracy i.e. parish council	4	1.4
Too many councillors at present	3	1.1
Inform public about meetings they are entitled to attend	2	0.7
Longer term of office	1	0.4
Could be run by partnerships	1	0.4
Planning/decision making more responsive and effective	1	0.4

Individuals from libraries, one-stop-shops etc

What would you like to see changed about the political structures?

Valid responses 34

	Number	Percentage
Be more open and accountable to the public	13	38.2
More consultation with public	7	20.6
Less political influence, just work together	4	11.8
Paid elected council leaders needed	3	8.8
More even representation	2	5.9
Faster decision making	2	5.9
Inform public about meetings they are entitled to attend	2	5.9
Simplify the system/streamline	1	2.9

Suggestions on how to seek views

Valid responses 28

	Number	Percentage
More in depth questions regarding own area in particular	5	17.9
Hold meetings	4	14.3
More regular information on results of surveys and any changes	4	14.3
More publicity	3	10.7
Personal interviews	3	10.7
More space/opportunities for explanations on questionnaires	2	7.1
More input or decisions from people with working knowledge of subject	2	7.1
Incentive to complete questionnaires (not financial)	1	3.6
Target specific age/circumstance groups	1	3.6
Supply more relevant background information with questionnaires	1	3.6
Proactive discussions with community leaders	1	3.6

Wirral Now

What would you like to see changed about the political structures?

Valid responses 213

	Number	Percentage
Parties should put people first and politics second	49	23.0
Less secrecy of decisions made	29	13.6
Public should appoint leader/mayor	26	12.2
Councillors should have loyalty for area	21	9.9
Borough should be split in two	10	4.7
Equal numbers of parties involved in expenditure	9	4.2
Fewer councillors per ward	9	4.2
Fewer drastic policy changes	7	3.3
Receive more information	6	2.8
Wirral should be treated as one community	6	2.8
Elections by proportional representation	6	2.8
Elected members should be trained and supported	4	1.9
Each district to have its own committee	3	1.4
Involve councillors in powerful decision making	3	1.4
Mayor and cabinet should be professional	3	1.4
More independent councillors	3	1.4
Need more accountability to voters	3	1.4
More PR	2	0.9
Vote for an individual not a party	2	0.9
All areas given the same benefits	2	0.9
More black candidates	1	0.5
Younger councillors	1	0.5
Local government needs to be strengthened	1	0.5
Anything that costs rate payers less	1	0.5
True independence for councils	1	0.5
Easier ways to get things done	1	0.5
One single strong leader required, e.g. mayor	1	0.5
Proportional representation	1	0.5
WBC does not operate in best interests of residents	1	0.5
More local control over local services	1	0.5

Suggestions on how to seek views

Valid responses 162

	Number	Percentage
Hold public meetings	40	24.7
Meeting information should be made public	22	13.6
Send questionnaire to every elector	22	13.6
Information published in newspapers and magazines	19	11.7
Consider what people need	18	11.1
Invite personal views in newspapers	15	9.3
Referendum	9	5.6
Councillors should target shops and super markets	5	3.1
Must not copy Westminster	2	1.2
Canvass for public vote	2	1.2
Roadshows	2	1.2
Information about local changes through post	2	1.2
Suggestion boxes	1	0.6
Do anything to stop party politics	1	0.6
Use of local political party activists so more residents are aware	1	0.6
Mobile information centre	1	0.6

Organisations

What would you like to see changed about the political structures?

Valid responses 48

	Number	Percentage
Be more open and accountable to the public	19	39.6
Simplify the system/streamline	6	12.5
Less political influence, just work together	5	10.4
More consultation with public	5	10.4
More even representation	4	8.3
Too many councillors at present	3	6.3
Proportional representation	1	2.1
Less involvement from central government	1	2.1
Movement back to more devolved democracy i.e. parish councils	1	2.1
Planning/decision making more responsive and effective	1	2.1
Cross party activity	1	2.1
More even funding across borough	1	2.1

Suggestions on how to seek views

Valid responses 29

	Number	Percentage
Listen more and take appropriate action	7	24.1
More publicity	6	20.7
Allow more time for return of questionnaires	4	13.8
Supply more relevant background information with questionnaires	3	10.3
Hold meetings	2	6.9
More regular information on results of surveys and any changes made	2	6.9
More input or decisions from people with working knowledge of subject	2	6.9
More space/opportunities for explanations on questionnaires	1	3.4
Target specific age/circumstance groups	1	3.4
More in depth questions regarding own area in particular	1	3.4

COUNC\EXECUTUVE(1-A)